AN
ACCOUNT OF MY LIFE

HER HIGHNESS NAWAB SULTAN JEHAN BEGAM, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.B.E., C.I.

AN ACCOUNT OF MY LIFE

BY HER HIGHNESS
NAWAB SULTAN JAHAN BEGAM
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.B.E., C.I.
RULER OF BHOPAL

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VOL. II

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

As Mr. Payne has remarked in the Preface to his admirable translation of Vol. I, the object with which this book has been written, has been sufficiently explained in the opening pages of the first Chapter of that volume. This volume is a continuation of Her Highness' narrative, and brings it down to the seventh year of her rule.

It has been no easy task to render the Urdu original into English. Her Highness' picturesque style has greatly contributed to the difficulty, and in order to retain the sense of the original, I have endeavoured to keep clear of the pitfalls of a too literal translation. A faithful reproduction of the Urdu text being my chief object, I have, on the one hand, taken care not to lose the spirit of the original in a meticulous regard for literal rendering, and have, on the other, avoided the temptation of taking the slightest liberty with the text. That I have succeeded in reproducing in the English translation the imagery of Her Highness' description, the delicacy of her touch, or the beauty of her phrase, I have not the presumption to claim.

All the speeches of Her Highness given in the following pages are translations from Urdu.

AHMEDABAD PALACE,
BHOPAL.
October 31*st*, 1921.

A. S. K.

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AN ACCOUNT OF MY LIFE

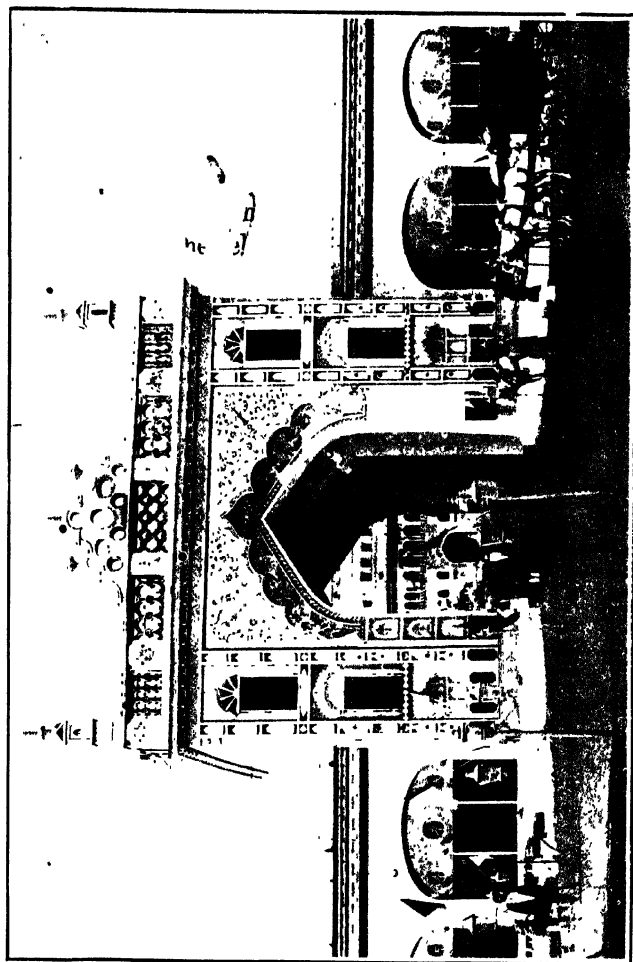
In the name of Allah,
the Merciful, the Compassionate

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST FORTNIGHT OF MY RULE

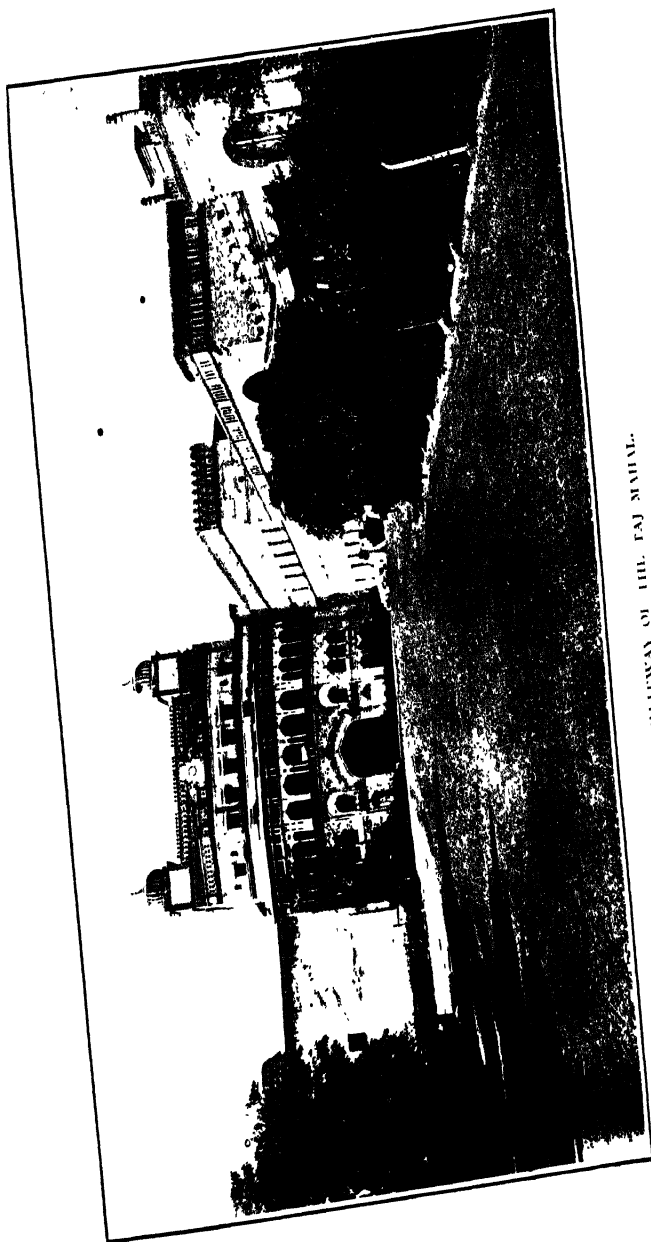
I HAD formally been recognized as Heir-Apparent during my grand-mother's life-time, and the Political officers, being well aware of the nature of my mother's illness, and of the estrangement that existed between us, had settled all the preliminaries to my accession to the *masnad*, before the end came. Immediately after my mother's death, and before I could reach Taj-Mahal, Mr. Lang, the Political Agent, wrote to Maulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, the State Vazir, informing him that the Government of India had recognized my right to be the Ruler of Bhopal, and directing him to communicate the news of Her Highness' death to me, and ask me to assume the reins of government. The Vazir saheb came to my palace, and having duly conveyed the Political Agent's message to me, proceeded to my husband's apartments. Shortly afterwards, we all drove together to the Taj-Mahal, where the sad offices of preparing my mother's body for burial awaited me.

Exactly at noon on the 28th of Safar 1319 A. H. my rule commenced, but the thoughts which came to me on that day in my melancholy surroundings,

were not thoughts of pomp and splendour. All my energy seemed to have left me, and the only thing on which my mind's eye dwelt, was the tale of my sorrows, the sorrows I had suffered for twenty seven long years. Events which I had long forgotten, suddenly leapt to my memory, and the fond hopes of reconciliation with my mother, which had lingered in spite of differences and disappointments, finally departed, leaving utter despondency in their wake. And though the Taj-Mahal was unusually crowded on that day, there yet seemed to pervade the air a sort of gloomy silence which bespoke sorrow and desolation. Since the palace had been built this was the fourth occasion that I had visited it. The first occasion was when the *nashra* ceremony of Bilqis Jehan Begam was performed—the happy ceremony of which the memory will always abide with me. The day was a gala day in Bhopal, the palace was full of guests, its walls seemed to resound with joyful noises of bustle and activity, and every one, even the servants and attendants, looked bright and happy. My husband and I had taken a *jora* for our daughter, and what a cordial welcome Her Highness had accorded us, and how happy she looked when she honoured us with costly robes and ornaments. The cynosure of every eye was little Bilqis, resplendently dressed and richly be-jewelled, and great indeed was our delight as we watched her childish face radiant with joy. How full of promise must the world have seemed to us in those happy circumstances. But inscrutable are the ways of Providence, and on Time's eventful sea many a hope rises only to founder and demonstrate the futility of human

ENTRANCE GATE OF THE TAJ MAHAL.

ambitions. Gone is my Bilqis for ever, gone many of those who lavished affection on her, and gone also the pæans of delight, the enchanting hopes and everything that looked so rapturous. The second occasion of my visit to the Taj-Mahal was when Bilqis lay on her death-bed in the Hayat-Afza garden, and I had gone to Her Highness to beg her to come and brighten my little one's last moments with her presence. On the occasion of my third visit, my mother herself lay ill, perilously near "the slow door, that opening lets in, lets out no more". And now for the fourth time I had come to my mother's palace, a house of pleasure and joy no longer, but a scene now of general mourning and lamentations. The Taj-Mahal was originally built on the model of the Mughal palaces of Delhi, and was a magnificent building with a fine open court-yard in the centre, but accustomed as Her Highness was to houses of old fashioned design, she did not find comfort in spacious halls and broad doorways, and had therefore had many alterations made which detracted considerably from the appearance of the original structure. The darkness of the cloudy day, and a variety of gloomy thoughts which passed through my mind, enhanced the depressing effect of the unattractive interior and the ill-ventilated rooms of the Taj-Mahal on my spirits. Like a book lay before me the events of Her Highness' rule, opening with a chapter of tender motherly affection, and closing with a long heart-rending record of misunderstandings and estrangement. One after another, the pages of the sad volume were turned before my eyes; her affectionate kindnesses, her angry outbursts, all came back

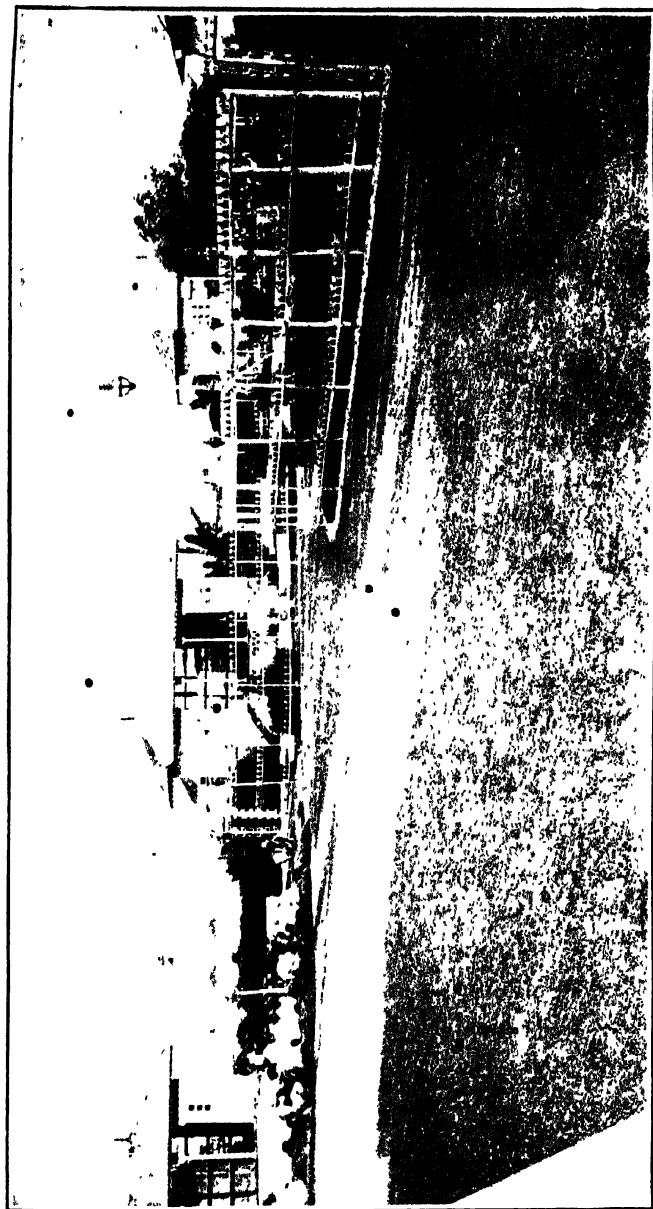
vividly to my mind, and in such gloomy thoughts the night passed away, and I slept but little. Early at dawn the next morning, the first thing that I did was to perform my ablutions and prostrate myself before the Ruler of all rulers : at the end of my prayers I raised my hands to implore Him to grant me patience in my bereavement, and strength to bear the heavy responsibilities of my new position. A few hours later, I dealt with the first batch of official papers which were sent up to me for orders.

On the morning of the 29th the State Vazir presented himself at the palace formally to offer his condolences, and in the course of the afternoon the Lady doctor called with her sister. This was the first time that she visited me, although she had been in Bhopal for about a year. Shortly after 3 o'clock in the afternoon, I received a visit from Colonel Malcolm Meade, the Agent to the Governor-General, and Mr. Lang, the Political Agent. As had been the custom during my mother's rule, they were met on alighting from their carriage by Mian Alamgir Mohammed Khan, Mian Ali Hasan Khan and Mian Nurul Hasan Khan, while my husband and the State Vazir received them at the steps of the reception room. After the exchange of the usual greetings Colonel Meade told me how shocked he had been to hear of Her Highness' death, and expressed the deepest sympathy with me in my sorrow. The Government of India having formally recognized me as Ruler, he suggested that my installation might take place three days later. It being a time of general mourning in the State, I told him that I wished to postpone the ceremony for some time, and Colonel

GATEWAY OF THE TAJ MAHAL.

Meade, having agreed, the 17th of Rabi-ul-Awwal was fixed for my installation.

For three days, according to the Indian custom, the wives of my relatives, *jagirdars* and State offici continued to visit the palace to offer their cond ences. I had been living away from my mother and my people for such a long time, that I must have seemed a stranger to all those who now me to visit me. I treated them all with every urtesy, and gave orders for their being entertained the expense of the State. When a death occurs n a Mussalman family, it is customary for the relaves and friends of the deceased to send dishes of .ood for the mourners as a mark of their sympathy. This custom is not enjoined by our religion and often results in needless extravagance, as luxurious food is usually prepared for the members of the bereaved family, as well as for all those who come to express their sympathy. And since it has always been my endeavour to discourage all such excesses at weddings and funerals, I politely declined to accept these marks of sympathy which many people were only too eager to show. I wished to be a living example in this respect to my people just as my mother and grandmother had been before me. My grandmother strictly abstained from all extravagances, and simplicity was the distinctive feature of the ceremonies of her household. Before her death she gave orders for her funeral to be conducted in strict accordance with the injunctions of Islam, and without the slightest display of pomp and pageantry. My mother too, though she displayed lavish liberality on many

occasions, and her generosity was proverbial in India, prohibited all such observances as were against the injunctions of our faith. It is a source of profound satisfaction to me that the example set by the rulers has been fruitful of good results for the people of Bhopal, and ignorant and wasteful customs are very much less in vogue in this State than in other parts of India. "People," says an Arabic adage, "walk in the footsteps of their rulers".

On the 29th and the following days I signed a large number of papers on which orders had been passed by Her late Highness, but which could not, on account of her illness, be submitted to her for signature. There was a great deal more to be done. Accounts had to be examined, income and expenditure returns checked and signed, and heavy arrears of routine work remained to be disposed of. I spent considerable time every day attending to my official work, and issued the necessary orders in consultation with the State Vazir. I was fully aware of the irregularities which had crept into many State offices, and of the corruption of certain officials, men who had abused my mother's confidence, and taken undue advantage of her forgiving disposition, but hasty measures always defeat their purpose, so I decided to proceed slowly and carefully, to acquire first of all the requisite knowledge about all the State offices and officials, and then to endeavour to introduce reforms in the administration.

PAVILION AND GARDEN IN THE TAJ MAHAL.

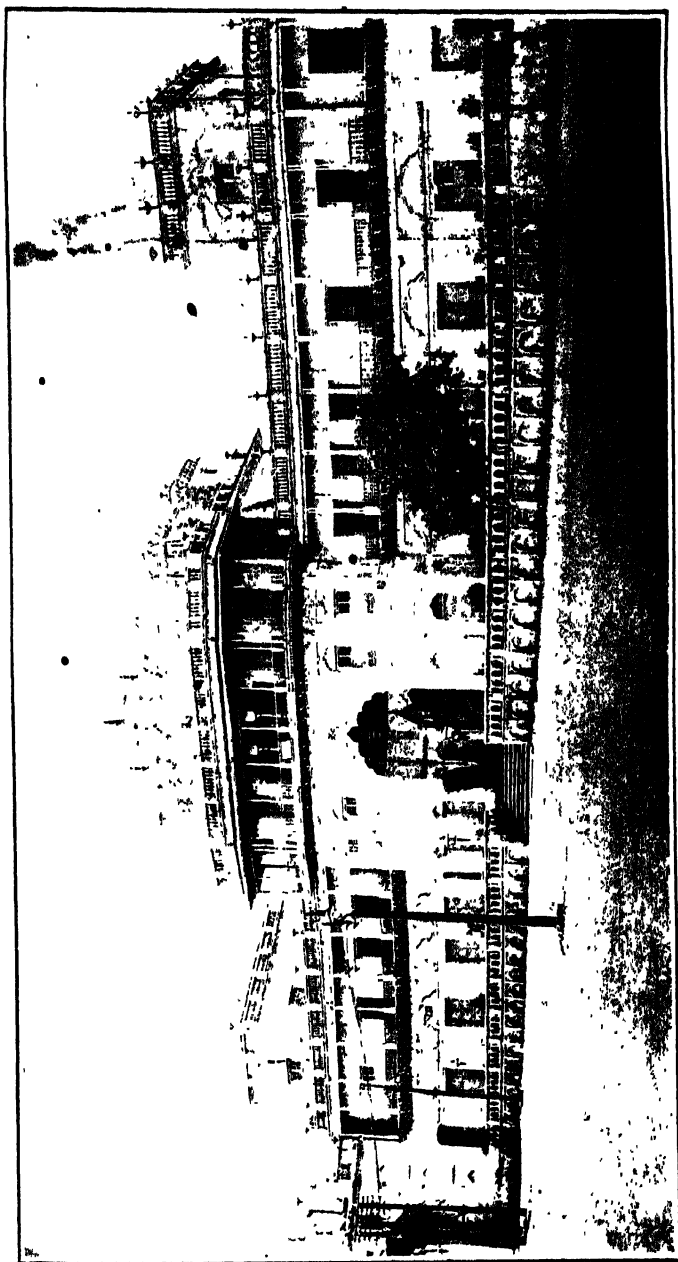
CHAPTER II

MY INSTALLATION

WITH the concurrence of Colonel Meade, the 17th of Rabi-ul-Awwal, 1319 A. H. (July 4, 1901) was fixed for my installation, and invitations were sent to all the Chiefs and nobles of the Bhopal Agency, and to many European friends. Mr. Lang, the Political Agent, whose many kindnesses to me at that difficult time I will always thankfully remember, kindly came to Bhopal a few days previously to assist me in the preparations, and on the 16th a rehearsal of the ceremony was held under his direction. At 3 o'clock the same afternoon, Colonel Meade arrived, and was accorded a public reception. The Imperial Service Cavalry with the State troops and *mahi-maratib* were in attendance at the station, and all the principal Sardars and officials of the State were also present to accord a befitting reception to the distinguished visitor. The station building was decorated with flags and bunting of various colours, and the entire platform was carpeted. A salute of 17 guns was fired by the State Battery as Colonel Meade's train arrived, and accompanied by Nawab Sultan Dulha and my sons, I met him and Mrs. Meade as they alighted from their saloon, and exchanged cordial greetings with them. Mrs. Meade sat with me in my carriage, and Colonel Meade sat with the Nawab saheb. The procession left the station under a military escort, and accord-

ing to the usual custom we halted at Pukhta-Pul, where I parted company with my guests, who went on to the new Kothi, whilst I, with the Nawab saheb and the Nawabzadas returned to my palace.

By the morning of the 17th all the guests had arrived. Arrangements had been made at the old Kothi for the entertainment of the European guests, while the Indian guests were accommodated in the palaces and gardens of the city. The installation darbar was to be a public function, and the Sadar Manzil Palace was suitably decorated for the purpose. The gorgeous pillars of the Darbar hall, the gold embroidered silk and velvet on the floor, the large silver chandeliers, and elaborate decorations in crimson and gold lent brilliance to the scene. On a throne in the centre of the hall were placed two massive silver chairs for myself and my honoured guest. On the left of the throne were the seats of the Political Agent, the Nawab sâheb, my sons and the high dignitaries of the State, while on the right were the staff of the Agent to the Governor-General and the other English officers. The main verandah in front of the Darbar hall was occupied by the *jagirdars*, officials, lawyers and prominent citizens of the town.

The entire route from the Pukhta-Pul to the Sadar Manzil Palace, was lined with troops. At intervals stood horses, richly caparisoned, and elephants and camels resplendent in gorgeous trappings. The people of the city had assembled in large numbers, and dressed, according to their wont, in all the colours of the rainbow, crowded the streets and housetops. Punctually at 10 o'clock, the

THE SADAR MANZIL.

Chief Accounts Officer and the *Naib-Bakhshi* of the State arrived at the new Kothi to conduct the Agent to the Governor-General to the Sadar Manzil Palace. Nawab Sultan Dulha, Maulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, the State Vazir and the *Mir Bakhshi* met the procession at the Pukhta-Pul, where the Nawab saheb entered Colonel Meade's carriage. The procession then started for the Sadar Manzil led by the Bodyguard and a squadron of Victoria Lancers, who were followed by elephants bearing the *mahi-maratib* and the pipers. Behind these came the elephant on which was the Mir Munshi of Indore Agency with the installation *khillat*, and next came an array of handsomely caparisoned horses, and after these the carriages of the Agent to the Governor-General and the Political Agent. On the right of Colonel Meade's carriage rode the Commandant of the Imperial Service Troops, and on the left the Chief of the State Police. The procession seemed to move with a slow measured tread, and presented an imposing spectacle winding in and out of the street leading to the palace. As Colonel Meade's carriage arrived at the Sadar Manzil, the troops in the Palace square presented arms, the Band struck up the National Anthem, and a salute of seventeen guns was fired from the Fatehgarh fort. Nawabzada Obaidulla Khan met Colonel Meade as he descended from his carriage, Nawab Nasrulla Khan received him near the fountain in the inner court, and when he reached the hall, the whole assembly stood up, and I advanced to meet him and conducted him to his seat. After all the guests were seated, Mr. Wyndham, First Assistant to the Agent to the Gov-

ernor-General, rose and read the following *kharita* from His Excellency the Viceroy :—

"To Her Highness Nawab Sultan Jahan Begam of Bhopal.

My esteemed Friend,

As my Agent, Colonel Meade, has already informed you, I received with profound regret the news of the death of your distinguished mother, Her Highness the Nawab Shah Jahan Begam, G.C.S.I., C.I. In her the British Government has lost a most loyal feudatory and a faithful friend, and I take this opportunity to express again to Your Highness my sorrow at the sad event which has occurred, and my condolence with yourself and your family. I have caused to be forwarded to Your Highness, through my Agent in Central India, a copy of the notification which was published by the Government of India on the subject of the melancholy intelligence; and I have since transmitted to Your Highness a telegram conveying to yourself and your family an expression of the regret and sympathy of His Majesty the King-Emperor of India.

I have now to offer you my congratulations on your accession to the *masnad* of Bhopal. I have learnt with much satisfaction that Your Highness has announced your intention of following in the footsteps of your distinguished predecessors, whose traditional loyalty to the British Crown is so well-known throughout India. Rest assured that in His Majesty's Viceroy you will always have a firm friend, and that, so long as the Bhopal State maintains under your rule its ancient reputation, the favour hitherto shown to your illustrious family by the

COLONEL M. J. MEADE.

British Government will be extended without diminution to yourself.

I remain, with much consideration,

Your Highness' Sincere Friend,

(Signed) CURZON.

Viceroy and Governor-General of India."

"SIMLA, June 28, 1901."

Mr. Wyndham having sat down, Colonel Meade rose, and made the following speech, the Urdu translation of which was afterwards read out to the audience by the Mir Munshi :—

"Your Highness,—His Excellency the Viceroy, representing His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor, has this day been graciously pleased to publicly acknowledge Your Highness' succession to your lamented mother, the late Nawab Shah Jahan Begam sahiba, G.C.S.I., C.I., of Bhopal. I know that His Excellency Lord Curzon would have liked to invest Your Highness himself, but unfortunately this was not possible. It is also a matter of regret that neither Colonel Barr, who was for so many years Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, nor Mr. Bayley has been able to be present; but while regretting the absence of these officials, I am bound to tell your Highness that I feel it a great honour and satisfaction that it has fallen to me to represent the Government of India on this auspicious occasion. It is doubly pleasant to me to be here today: first, because Your Highness' mother, Her Highness the Nawab Shah Jahan Begam, was similarly installed as Ruler of Bhopal by my father nearly thirty-three years ago; and secondly, because I was for so many years Political Agent in Bhopal,

and am personally acquainted with your Highness and your Highness' family. Your Highness is now installed upon the *masnad* of your ancestors, and though you will not, I hope, have to act the part which fell to the lot of some of them, to repel the invader at the gates of Bhopal like Wazir Mohammad, or to go down yourself among your troops as your grand-mother, the illustrious Sikandar Begam, did in 1857, there will be for you in the administration of your country an ample field for those talents which, I believe, you have inherited from the rulers who have preceded you. Your State has suffered terribly of late years from famine and pestilence, and I believe that the present census will show that nearly twenty-nine per cent. of its inhabitants have gone, and nearly a third of its land lies fallow. This, if correct, must entail, among other difficulties, a considerable loss of revenue, and it will be for Your Highness, by wise measures, to restore the population and revive the finances of your State. You have an experienced Minister in Khan Bahadur Maulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, and my friend Mr. Lang, the Political Agent, will always give you his advice and assistance. But above all I am glad to think that in the Nawab Consort, Ehtishamul Mulk Alijah Ahmed Ali Khan, to whom I offer my congratulations, Your Highness has an adviser and helper, in close communion with yourself, whose tried experience will assist and guide you in governing your State. It is unnecessary to say much to a ruler of Bhopal about her relations with the Paramount Power. Since the days that we first came in contact with the Chiefs of Central India, the Nawabs and Begams

MR. J. LANG, I.C.S.

of this State have always been famous for the loyal fidelity with which they have adhered to their engagements with the British Government, and I am absolutely confident that your Highness will maintain and hand on untarnished the high traditions of good faith and loyalty which you have inherited. I will only add that I congratulate you most heartily on behalf of the English ladies and gentlemen present, as well as on behalf of myself, on your having ascended the *masnad* of Bhopal, and we wish you a prosperous future as Ruler of your State. May Your Highness' age be prolonged like that of your great-grandmother the Qudisa Begam, and may you be illustrious and honoured as your grand-mother and mother, the Sikandar and Shah Jahan Begams.'

To this speech I replied in the following words :

" Hon'ble Colonel Meade, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I cannot commence my speech without expressing my sense of deep sorrow at the great loss I have sustained in the death of my dearly beloved mother, whose eminent virtues will always be remembered by me and the people of the State. A faithful friend and an ardent supporter of the British Government, many of her acts prove her loyalty and attachment to the Paramount Power. And now that she is gone for ever, let us pray that God may help us to bear this affliction, and grant her eternal peace and happiness in Paradise. I ascend the *masnad* of my ancestors to-day, and my grateful thanks are due to His Majesty the King-Emperor and his Viceroy in India, who have graciously recognized my right. You are all aware that in my veins runs the blood of those valiant predecessors of mine, who earned

distinction and renown by serving the British Crown in times of doubt, danger and difficulty, and that being so, nothing, I assure you, can be dearer to me than to walk in the foot-steps of my forbears, and keep the glory of their names untarnished.

"Colonel Meade,—It is not your advice alone for which I owe you a debt of gratitude ; I am grateful to you for your presence also, as I cannot forget that your father Sir Richard Meade similarly graced my mother's installation with his presence three and thirty years ago. I am very thankful to you for what you have said about Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk Alijah, whose sincere sympathy has been my best support for the last twenty-seven years, and I am sure I can confidently rely on his sage counsel and on the loyalty of the Minister of the State.

"The financial condition of the State is unfortunately exceedingly unsatisfactory. It is never an easy thing to restore financial prosperity, and I well realize that a difficult task awaits me in this respect. Signs of poverty are visible in all directions ; the population has decreased by nearly one-third, and large tracts of land need to be brought again under the plough. I am, however, hopeful, and feel sure that the Ruler of all rulers who has entrusted this State and its people to my care, will help me in my undertakings. I am greatly indebted to the Viceroy for the kind words of his *kharita*, and must also acknowledge the kindness and courtesy I have received from Colonel Meade, and my esteemed friend Mr. Lang, whose assistance and advice I will often have to seek. And I must thank you Mrs. Meade,

and all ladies and gentlemen, for the honour you have done me in coming to Bhopal to take part in this ceremony. I am sure, Ladies and Gentlemen, that you will all echo my prayer that God Almighty may keep me and my children steadfast in our devotion to the British Crown, and that He may bless and strengthen the ties which unite me to my people."

Colonel Meade perhaps did not expect that I would, in spite of my *burqa*, be able to read my speech in the presence of such a large and brilliant gathering without showing signs of nervousness. He was listening to my words with rapt attention, and when I concluded, he turned towards me, and with feelings which can readily be imagined, said "*Shabash, Shabash*".

At the conclusion of my speech, a salute of 21 guns was fired by the State Artillery. The Mir Munshi of the Indore Residency then stepped forward, and placed the silver trays containing the *khillat* * before Colonel Meade. The latter rose and placed a necklace of pearls round my neck, and then turning towards the Nawab saheb, fastened a necklace about his neck, and presented him with a sword. After this the Nawab saheb rose and made a short and appropriate speech, in which he expressed his gratitude to the British Government for the honours conferred upon him, and thanked Colonel Meade and Mr. Lang for the courtesy and kindness he had received at their hands. He then presented a hundred and one gold *mohurs* to Colonel Meade

* My *khillat* consisted of two robes of honour, a pearl necklace, a tiara, a gun and a sword.

as his *nazrana* to the British Government. *Nazars* were also presented by my sons, the State Vazir and the *Mir Bakhshi*. The Darbar terminated with garlands and *itr* and *pan* being presented to Colonel Meade, Mr. Lang, and the other guests and *Darbaris* of the State.

At the Darbar Colonel Meade had addressed Nawab Sultan Dulha, as "Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk Alijah," and the intimation of this title having been conferred upon the Nawab saheb by His Excellency the Viceroy, was received only a few minutes before the Darbar commenced. This title, which was highly valued by the Nawab saheb, afforded us all very great pleasure, for during the eighty-four years that the Bhopal State had been ruled over by women, this was the first occasion that the Nawab Consort had been honoured with a title at the installation of the Ruler.

Colonel Meade was an old and highly esteemed friend of my family, and had endeared himself to us by treating us all with remarkable kindness and courtesy. I am sure he could not have shown greater courtesy even to his own relations. He had been in Bhopal as Political Agent for a number of years, and knew us all intimately. He was well acquainted with all the happenings of the last twenty-seven years, and with the causes of the unfortunate estrangement between my mother and myself. He knew why I was not permitted to attend Darbars, and had not even been allowed to acquire any experience of administrative affairs beyond what the management of my own *jagir* afforded me. My mother, too, it is true, had nothing to do with the actual administration

of the State during Nawab Sikandar Begam's rule, but she was always by her mother's side, and that in itself was a great training for her. She attended Darbars, accompanied her mother to all public functions, heard details of administration discussed, saw everything that was going on, and had thus acquired considerable experience by the time she succeeded to her responsible position. Knowledge is said to be one of the highest objects of human endeavour, but mere book-knowledge does not go a very long way. Books are excellent things no doubt, but human intellect can develop, and sometimes develop much better, by means of other things. What are called experience and training, are frequently undervalued and it is forgotten that they are the best of teachers, and that book-learning without experience is like a house with weak foundations. The wonderful world of human affairs is so constituted that in the sphere of great responsibilities the need of practical experience and suitable training in the school of events, is greater than that of book-wisdom. So long as fortune smiled on me, my mother had honoured me with every mark of confidence and good-will, and official papers were sent to me regularly, but a change came after my marriage, the stream of papers began to dwindle, and it ceased to flow when Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan's influence became supreme. True, the work of my *jagir* was a sort of training, but how could it prepare me for the difficulties of the arduous task that now lay before me ? I knew, however, that God-willing, I might one day be called upon to assume the reins of government, and so in my humble way I had begun to prepare myself by

going deep into everything which came to my knowledge, by weighing pros and cons carefully before deciding about anything, and by endeavouring to study men and affairs in my own limited circle very closely. Behind all this was my determination not to flinch in the face of any difficulty, and never to despair. And though when I became ruler, difficulties came upon me thick and fast, I have by, God's grace, encountered them all successfully. An Urdu poet has well said :—

Mighty forces lie concealed
Behind a daring mind ;
Bless'd is every doughty deed
By God of all mankind.

An incident in connection with the Darbar is worth mentioning. The late Munshi Qudratullah, the Superintendent of the Guest House, a man who had grown grey in the service of the State, and had witnessed the installation of my mother and grandmother, forced his way somehow into the Darbar Hall, and coming close to where I was seated, thus addressed me :—

" Sarkar, your slave Qudratullah who carried you in his arms when you were a child, offers his humble congratulations on your accession ; May your servants celebrate the silver, golden and diamond jubilees also in course of time."

The old man's words and manner touched me considerably. He had come to Bhopal when I was but 2 years old, and had served my mother and grandmother with great zeal and loyalty.

After the Darbar a telegram was sent to Colonel Barr, the Resident at Hyderabad, informing him of my installation having taken place. Colonel Barr

had long known my family intimately, and we had all received many kindnesses from him. In the afternoon twenty prisoners were released from the State jail, and a military gymkhana was held on the Jehangirabad parade ground at which Bhopal Imperial Service Lancers displayed some fine feats of horsemanship. At night, a State banquet was held at the Lal Kothi which had been well decorated for the occasion. I joined the party according to my custom at the conclusion of dinner, accompanied by the Nawab saheb and my sons, and shortly after my arrival Colonel Meade proposed the health of His Majesty the King-Emperor. A few minutes later I rose, and in the following words proposed the health of Colonel and Mrs. Meade :—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a matter of great pride and pleasure to me that Colonel and Mrs. Meade and so many other friends are my guests this evening. Hospitality is a duty as well as a pleasure; a duty because both my religion and the traditions of my house lay great stress upon it, while it cannot but be a pleasure when I see so many friends around me, friends whose presence is a great comfort to me at a time when a great sorrow has befallen me. The sincere sympathy which the officers of the British Government have extended to me in my grief, and the presence of Colonel and Mrs. Meade, and of you, Ladies and Gentlemen on this occasion, cannot but evoke sentiments of gratitude and pleasure in my mind. The uneasiness of the head that wears a crown is proverbial, but I find strength and courage in the reflection that in the British Government I have

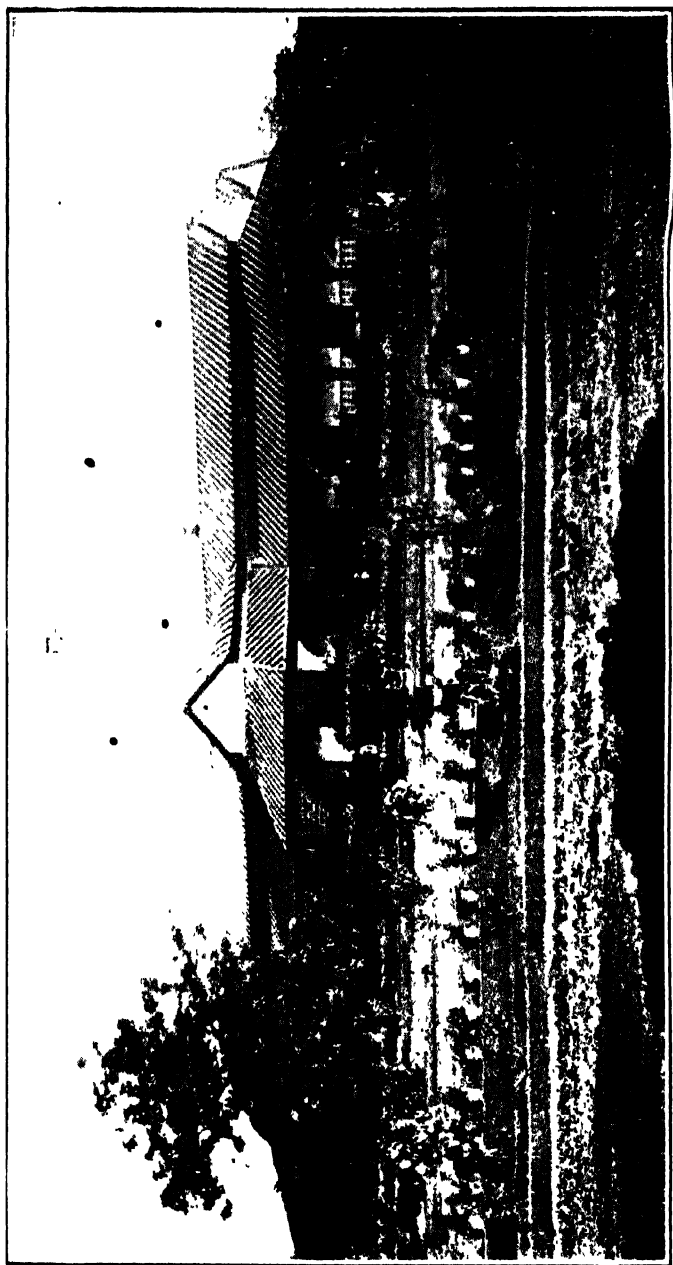
my best friend, and on its cordial support and assistance I can confidently rely. I will not weary you with a long speech, for you have presently to proceed to the palace to witness a display of fire-works, but before sitting down I have a toast to propose, and that is the health of my highly-esteemed friends, Colonel and Mrs. Meade."

After I had sat down, Colonel Meade rose to propose my health, and said that he and all the guests prayed that my rule might be long and prosperous, and that my endeavours for promoting the happiness and prosperity of my people be crowned with unqualified success.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi Abdul Jabbar, in a brief speech, proposed the health of Mr. Lang, who responded with proposing that of the State Vazir. At 11 o'clock all the guests repaired to the Sadar-Manzil to see a display of fireworks and illuminations.

On the morning of the 18th Colonel Meade visited the new Central jail which had been built by my mother's orders. He also visited the lines of Bhopal Imperial Service Lancers; and from there went to the Nishat-Afza garden, where he stood by my mother's grave talking long of her many virtues. On her way back from the Nishat Afza, Mrs. Meade visited the Lady Lansdowne Hospital, and entered her remarks in the visitors' book.

Late in the afternoon, I paid a farewell visit to Colonel Meade at the Lal Kothi, and this being a State visit, the usual ceremonial was observed and a salute was fired from the Fatehgarh fort. Two photographs were then taken in the grounds of the Lal Kothi, one of Colonel Meade, Mr. Lang,

THE LAL KOTHI.

the Nawab saheb and the Nawabzadas, and the other of Mrs. Meade and myself. Colonel Meade and party left Bhopal the same evening for Indore, and as the departure was private, no formalities were observed. By the evening of the 20th all the guests had departed.

The Raja of Rajgarh, in view of the long connection of his State with Bhopal, sent me a *jora* with two caparisoned horses which I accepted, and I rewarded His Highness' messengers with a *khillat* and other presents. Answers were sent to all congratulatory letters and *kharitas*, and those officials of the State who had supervised the general arrangements in connection with the ceremony, were given rewards and presents in recognition of their services.

Overwhelmed as I was with grief at my mother's death, I took no steps for some time about my eldest son, Nawab Nasrulla Khan, being formally appointed the Heir-Apparent. There was, moreover, no need for haste. It was not until a few days before my installation that the draft of an agreement was, according to the custom of the State, sent to Nasrulla Khan. The document, which contained the following clauses, was duly signed by him and returned to me :—

CLAUSE 1.—I promise that I will always remain loyal and faithful to the State, and that I will always abide by the terms of this agreement. In the event of my infringing any clause of this agreement, the Ruler and high officials of Government will have every right and power to call for an explanation of my conduct, and to restrain me from wrong practices.

Clause 2.—I promise never to admit to my company and never to have any dealings with persons ill-disposed towards the Darbar, or of bad and suspicious character, or any person of whom I may be warned by my mother. I will not employ any one dismissed from the service of the State, or of any *deorhi*.

Clause 3.—I am a Mussalman of the Sunni persuation, and promise that I will never from any motives, or at anybody's instigation, change my religion.

Clause 4.—All matters connected with the marriages of my children, their education, up-bringing and place of residence will be decided in accordance with my mother's wishes. I promise to treat all members of my family with affection and courtesy, to abstain from everything savouring of oppression, and from all acts ill-becoming a man of culture. I will never take a second wife without the permission of my revered mother.

Clause 5.—I undertake to accept any *jagir*, or allowance which Her Highness may be pleased to grant for my maintenance. I promise to abstain from extravagance, and never to incur any debts.

Clause 6.—I further promise that I will never hold direct communication with officers of the British Government, nor make to any of them, verbally or in writing, any complaint about my parents. Any cause, great or small, that I may have for complaint, will be duly brought by me to Her Highness' notice.

Clause 7.—In the management of my *jagir* I undertake to comply with the laws and usages of the State, and with the instructions which I may receive from Her Highness. I promise to dismiss from my service at once, any mischievous person

NAWAB NASRULLA KHAN.

whose presence may be considered undesirable by my mother.

CLAUSE 8.—I promise to abstain from all ungentlemanly and undesirable pursuits, and all such practices as may tend to prejudice my reputation and the administration of the State.

CLAUSE 9.—I promise that according to the custom of the State, I will never leave Her Highness' territory without her permission.

CLAUSE 10.—I promise always to pay due regard on all occasions to the rank and position of my brothers and all officials of the State. I will be particularly mindful of this obligation in my relations with my younger brothers.

On receipt of the agreement which was duly executed by Nasrulla Khan, I directed the State Vazir to write to the Political Agent on my behalf, and request the formal sanction of the Government of India to the appointment of Nasrulla Khan as Heir-Apparent. A formal communication was accordingly sent to the Political Agent, but no reply having been received for some time, the State Vazir wrote a second time to the Political Agent on the subject. On October 9, 1901, a letter was received from the Political Agent intimating the sanction of the Government of India, and a notification was accordingly published in the State Gazette on the 1st of Rajab 1320 A. H. to the effect that my eldest son, Nawab Nasrullah Khan had been, with the approval of the Government of India, appointed Heir-Apparent of the State.

CHAPTER III

THE DEATH OF NAWAB EHTISHAMUL MULK ALIJAH.

THE difficulties which I had to encounter on assuming the reins of government were due to causes which have been already described. My mother, Nawab Shah Jahan Begam, succeeded to the *masnad* in the year 1285 A. H., and the industry and ability with which she devoted herself to the administration of the State, won the appreciation of the Government of India, and of the people generally. The speeches and letters of the Viceroys of India, and the officers of the Political Department, as well as the pages of *Tajul-Iqbal* bear eloquent testimony to the energy and enthusiasm with which my mother conducted the administration of the State during the early years of her rule. Endowed with a keen intellect and a wonderful perseverance, she would work for hours every day studying official papers, and unravelling the knots of intricate affairs with cautious discernment. Almost all the departments of the State were reorganized, each under a responsible head, but my mother always thought that the ultimate responsibility for the well-being of the State and her people lay with her. The ardent solicitude of the Ruler for the happiness of the people could not but have good results. An era of reforms was ushered in, signs of all round improvement in administration became visible, and the people prospered.

In the year 1288 A. H., my mother contracted a second marriage, as indeed she was permitted by her religion to do. Her Highness' confidence in Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan's learning and ability was unbounded, and for some time the Nawab did render useful assistance to my mother, but a change came when his influence acquired complete ascendency, and Her Highness began to relax her grip at the reins of government. For this implicit confidence which my mother reposed in Siddiq Hasan Khan, no blame attaches to her, for whom in the world can a wife trust more than her husband? And were it not for the unfortunate circumstance that Siddiq Hasan Khan had another wife too, and children also, whose interests he had to look after, he would, I am sure, have proved worthy of my mother's confidence in every way, and a loyal and devoted friend to her and her people.

Siddiq Hasan Khan soon began to introduce his adherents into the various departments of the State. These were men whose sole recommendation was their loyalty to their patron, and who cared little either for the efficiency of the administration, or the prosperity of the people. Possessing no qualification for their appointments, and fearing that fortune may not always continue to smile, their one concern was to make hay while the sun shone, and lay by a sufficient quantity of it for a rainy day. This state of things wrought great mischief. The efficiency of administration, attained after years of consistent endeavour by my mother, went by the board, and the edifice of prosperity, so difficult to construct and so easy to destroy, began to totter.

All sorts of evils crept into the administration of the State. My own affairs, as the readers of the first volume will remember, became extremely complicated and perplexing; but what cared Siddiq Hasan Khan for these things, so long as his star was in the ascendant, and his adherents were waxing rich and prosperous. The task of administration always bristles with difficulties, and realising to his astonishment and regret, that it was not exactly a bed of roses, Siddiq Hasan Khan hit upon the plan of having a Minister of the State with full powers—a plan, which he thought would give him ample leisure and better opportunities for furthering his schemes. Colonel Ward, the newly-appointed Minister, was an English officer of great experience and ability, an honest administrator and a conscientious worker, under the stimulus of whose genial personality, my mother began once more to evince interest in the affairs of the Ståte. But she was no longer the energetic ruler of some years before, as the unfortunate events which led to the degradation of Siddiq Hasan Khan, had wrought a great change in her, and she was so disappointed and depressed that she found little enjoyment in anything. She was afraid, moreover, that if she looked into everything too closely, unpleasant differences might arise with the Minister, whom, because of his full powers, she now regarded as the ultimate responsible authority. She decided to let matters drift, and leave everything to the Minister of the State.

In my judgment the appointment in an Indian State of an independent Minister is not a wise step. An absolute Minister naturally wishes to see his views

carried out in all matters, and resents interference with his authority and disagreement with his suggestions. Much, it is true, depends on the personality of the Minister. If possessing a very high sense of loyalty, and the world is not destitute of such men, he subordinates his wishes to those of the Ruler, but if he elects to oppose the Ruler, he can resort to a thousand and one devices for having his own way. That the Minister, especially if he hails from outside, cannot have that sympathy and affection for the people of the State, which their own Prince will always have for them, can hardly be gainsaid. And therefore, to my mind, the best of all plans is for the Ruler to take a keen personal interest in administration, for in an Indian State the Ruler's personal association with his people is a factor of great importance, and anything which tends to diminish this association, is not likely to be attended with good results.

In suggesting the appointment of an independent Minister, Siddiq Hasan Khan was guided by anything but a desire for the good of the State, for he had his own ends in view. All went well so long as Colonel Ward, a man of upright character and ripe experience, remained in office, but things assumed a different complexion, as soon as Colonel Ward was replaced by Munshi Imtiaz Ali. I need not dwell again on the general corruption and ruin for which the latter's term of office was responsible; suffice it to say that all the good work of Colonel Ward was speedily undone, the people began to groan under a system of organized oppression, and a dense pall of mal-administration hung over the State when Imtiaz Ali died. The unhappy days of the latter's *regime* are

still remembered, and the echoes of the wails and lamentations of that period have not yet wholly died down.

Munshi Imtiaz Ali was succeeded by Maulvi Abdul Jabbar, who, too, wielded absolute powers. The latter proved an honest and capable administrator, but the canker had gnawed deep into the vitals of the State, and the remedies applied by Maulvi Abdul Jabbar did not go to the root-cause of the troubles. The case called for an application of the surgeon's knife, and gratifying results could hardly be hoped for without root and branch alterations in the system of government, the dismissal and punishment of corrupt officials, and a thorough overhauling of the entire administrative machinery. This the Minister could not undertake. He was too advanced in years, and the fact of his not being well-versed in revenue matters, was a great shortcoming. The entire reorganization of administration would have been possible only with the full support of the Ruler—but Siddiq Hasan Khan's machinations and their untoward consequences had sapped my mother's energy, and she now considered her interference in State affairs unnecessary in view of the full powers which had been granted to the Minister of the State.

During the last year of Her Highness' reign, her continued illness and the consequent relaxation of even nominal control, helped the abuses to grow still more rampant. Dishonesty was rife, and the fear of punishment was so completely gone, that frauds were committed in broad daylight. When on succeeding to the *masnad*, I examined the State accounts, I found a sum of only Rs. 40,000 in the

State treasury, and about two lakhs in the *Deorhi Khas*. Among others, a sum of 5 lakhs shown under expenditure was unaccounted for; Chunni Lal, the State Treasurer, stating that the amount had been handed over to Munshi Abdul Husain, and the latter denying having received it. The accounts produced by Munshi Abdul Husain the Superintendent of the *Deorhi Khas*, were in a fearful condition, and told their tale plainly. Erasures were only too prominent, vouchers were missing, and the necessary receipts were not forthcoming. The accounts of Her Highness' *Toshakhana*, which was in charge of Gul Chaman, were equally mutilated and confused. A large amount of jewellery was stated to have been given away by Her Highness, but most of the articles had not been entered anywhere. The palace attendants had taken advantage of my mother's illness in the most heartless and unscrupulous manner, and kind-hearted and generous as Her Highness was, she had, during her illness, been begged to give away large sums of money in charity. No proper account of these disbursements was kept, and such accounts as were produced, revealed a state of hopeless chaos, and years of scrutiny could not have unravelled their mystery. Those who were answerable for the defalcations and embezzlements, disclaimed all knowledge of the doubtful transactions, although their guilt was only too obvious, and both their manner and speech betrayed them. The fact of my mother having been too ill to exercise any control on her household establishment, had encouraged the unscrupulous time-servers by whom she was surrounded, to utilise the opportunity to enrich them-

selves. The accounts kept by Nastran, Faredun Khan and Mahmud Khan were no exception to the rule, but they were dead and gone, so there was nothing for it but to pass over the evidence of their misdeeds in silence. The accounts of the State were kept on the old *kayesthi* system, which found favour during the rule of the Mughal Emperors. It was an intricate system of book-keeping, and abounded in signs and phrases which lent themselves to wrong practices. The State treasury was anything but a source of strength, the Nazims and Tahsildars neglecting the collection of State revenues in their anxiety to serve their own ends; and for some months I experienced considerable difficulty in finding money for the payment of the monthly salaries of State employees. My mother, as she lay on her death-bed, had been greatly perturbed by the reports which reached her of the state of things in and out of her palace, but what could she do in her helpless condition, knowing as she did that the evils were deep-seated. Now that the mantle of responsibility fell on me, my perplexity was great. I decided to postpone the audit of accounts, and to confine myself for the time being to ascertaining the actual financial position of the State. The receipts for the previous year totalled 18 lakhs and the balance in the State treasury was 40 thousand. It was the middle of the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal, and in about a fortnight's time the monthly salaries amounting to about 2 lakhs of rupees were due. My anxiety can readily be imagined. The immediate difficulty was tided over by an advance from the *Deorhi Khas* to the State Treasury, but what about the future?

Urgent orders were sent to the Nazims and Tahsildars to expedite the collection of land revenue, as the *asarh* instalment was shortly due. The State Vazir was instructed to ask the Railway authorities for the payment of the State's share of the profits, and after some time money began to flow into the treasury. The Revenue Department unfortunately was in a state of hopeless chaos, and I was afraid lest the new settlement, which was not yet completed, might confirm rather than remove the evils which had crept in. A twenty years' settlement had been followed by one of ten years—and the latter had hardly been completed, when a settlement for 30 years was proposed. The village records were in great disorder, and had not been maintained up to date, while the corruption of minor officials was a fruitful source of harassment to the agricultural community. Apart from that, I am not an admirer of long-term settlements. After careful thought I decided to postpone the work of resettlement, and called for the necessary papers and files from the Vazir saheb, who was in favour of a long term settlement. Just at this time I happened to read the famous resolution of Lord Curzon's Government on Land Revenue Policy published in the *Gazette of India* of the 18th January, 1902. The opinion of the Government of India that "short term settlements excite less discontent than the long term settlements, when not associated with inquisitorial proceedings," strengthened my conviction that the proposed long term settlement was undesirable. I therefore deferred all action for sometime in order to be able to give further consideration to the matter.

Such were the difficulties which beset my path, difficulties which might well have unnerved me, but for the helpful advice of my husband which was my faithful guide and constant support. To him the work of the State was a labour of love, and his solicitude for the welfare of the people equalled my own. In those anxious days the help and sympathy of such a one was a great blessing. The Vazir saheb could certainly have given me valuable assistance but a difference of opinion, the invariable concomitant of an absolute Ministry, had sprung up and was an obstacle in the way. Possessing absolute powers he was naturally jealous of his authority, and did not welcome the change in the order of things which had resulted in the Ruler manifesting keen interest in the details of administration. My inclinations lay in the direction of a full discussion of every matter in all its bearings before a decision was reached, but the Vazir saheb regarded my interest in State affairs as a sort of encroachment on his authority. This was most unfortunate, for the difference had its roots in two incompatible theories of administration. To my mind the Ruler owes a sacred duty to the people whose destinies are committed to him ; it is his bounden duty to look after the happiness of his people which it will be impossible for him to do, unless the administration is conducted on lines in consonance with the principles he wishes to follow. A senseless meddling intervention on his part in everything will have anything but blissful results, for it is vitally important to discriminate between the big things and the small. The small things will take care of themselves if the Ruler has capable men

around him, but in the big things it is incumbent on the Ruler—at any rate I think so—to evince real interest—for his genuine sympathy and moral support can alone be the best guarantees of the administration being conducted in the interests of the people.

The financial position of the State being far from satisfactory, it was imperative that expenses should be cut down. My enemies were not slow in spreading all sorts of rumours about my intentions and forecasting sensational developments. Base slander and wild calumny being the breath of their nostrils, I was already being described as merciless and hard-hearted, and I knew that their fertile imagination would attribute unscrupulous motives to me if any reductions were forthwith effected in some of the establishments which had outlived their usefulness. When I suggested to the Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk that retrenchment seemed to be the greatest desideratum of the administration, he agreed, but advised me to postpone action in the matter for some time, and devote myself to introducing other reforms in the administration. I acted upon this advice, and contented myself with cutting down the miscellaneous establishments considerably.

The time of my sons' marriage festival was drawing near, and the reason which led us to postpone the ceremonies having ceased to exist, the 7th of Shawwal was fixed upon. We intended that the ceremony should be celebrated in a manner befitting the position of a Ruler's sons, and though all excesses were to be rigorously avoided, we yet decided to invite a large number of friends and the public at large to share in the general rejoicings. In the first week of the

holy Ramazan 1319 A. H., *joras* began to arrive at the palace. Large numbers of State officials, *jagirdars*, and notables of the city broke their fast at the palace every day, and after prayers sat down to the evening meal. The assembly would disperse after the Nawab saheb had distributed *itr* and *pan* with his own hands.

In the first volume of this book, my readers have read of my second son Nawabzada Obaidulla Khan having learnt the whole of the Holy Quran by heart. This was a source of extreme pleasure to my husband. And inasmuch as the first recitation of the Holy Quran by Obaidulla Khan was, on account of the estrangement that had sprung up between my mother and myself, attended by very few people, we decided that our son should again recite the Quran in the month of Ramazan, and a large number of the nobles and dignitaries of the State were invited to be present. A large and handsome *shamiana* was erected for this purpose in the square of the Moti Mahal Palace, and from the first of Ramazan the recitation took place every evening and the assembly dispersed after prayers and the evening meal.

Many things engaged Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk's attention at this time. He possessed keen soldierly tastes, and among the first things which he undertook on my assuming control of the State affairs was the reorganization of the troop of Body-Guard Cavalry. He asked me to lend the services of Captain Abdul Qayyum Khan of the Victoria Lancers who succeeded in effecting many improvements in the discipline and training of this troop, for which

a most handsome uniform had been selected. On the 23rd Ramazan arrangements were in full swing for the celebration of the *Id* festival which follows the holy month of fasting. The Nawab saheb gave his personal attention to all preparations, and as it was necessary that I should take part in the *Id* prayers, and my visit to the congregation was to be of a semi-official nature, the Nawab saheb visited the *Idgah* to satisfy himself about the arrangements that were being made. In the evening he worked till a very late hour, and the Chief Munshi was in attendance preparing lists of guests who were to be invited, and writing out invitations. I too remained busy with my papers till about midnight, and at about 1 o'clock I sent an attendant to go and see whether the Nawab saheb was still engaged, as I was desirous of consulting him about a certain list of guests. The attendant returned and informed me that the Nawab saheb was still working. It being very late, I retired to my room and slept. An hour later I was aroused by my attendant who told me that the hour of the morning meal had come, but the Nawab saheb was not yet awake. I went to my husband's apartments to awake him myself. I approached close to his couch and called—no answer came. I called a second and yet a third time; there was again no answer. A sudden indescribable fear took possession of me, a fear which stunned me and held me mute. Bending low I placed my hand gently on his face, but he did not breathe; I felt his pulse, it was not beating. A shudder passed through my frame and something chilled my blood. I summoned Nasrulla Khan and Obaidulla Khan who arrived

in hot haste. The latter arrived first and asked me excitedly what the matter was. "Your father," I answered, "does not breathe and his pulse is not beating" A minute later Nasrulla Khan appeared and put the same question to me. I said to him what I said to his brother, and both of them stood mute and motionless in a confusion of mind too great for words, their foreheads moist with drops of perspiration. Silence settled upon us—who shall say what a storm of feeling moved beneath that silence! I told Nasrulla Khan to send for Hakim Nurul Hasan, Dr. Wali Mahomed and the Vazir saheb immediately, and to send word to my husband's sister also. Hakim Nurul-Hasan and Dr. Wali Mahomed soon arrived and as they were making their examination, I sat still and speechless longing to hear just one word of hope again. I was straining my ears to hear them say, "yes, his heart is still beating," but all lingering hopes were dashed to the ground as the Doctors turned to me and said "God's will is done." The grief which these words caused me, it is impossible for me to describe. My pen may write the word 'grief' and my tongue may utter it, but, the intensity of my feelings no words written or spoken can adequately express. At this moment the boom of the morning gun was heard, loud and clear, signifying that the fast of the faithful had begun, the fast which began for me without my husband, and for my children without their father. To be deprived in the twinkling of an eye of one who had been my best friend and helpmate for twenty-seven years, whose advice and affection had been my best guide during my trials and anxie-

NAWAB EHTASHAM-UL-MULK ALIJAH.

ties, and whose sympathy and love my best support, was indeed a terrible affliction. To lose him now that a sea of difficulties confronted me and I needed the help of his wise counsel more than ever, was worse than an affliction—it was an unbearable calamity. The annals of the world, however, record many such bereavements and sorrows, and the one great lesson which they preach, is, that by sorrows alone is one's patience tested by the Almighty, and that those alone who bear with patience their misfortunes and trials, are adjudged worthy of His blessings. To them, He sends His message of comfort in the Holy Book:—

* "We will surely try you with somewhat of fear and hunger, and some waste of wealth and life and fruits; and give you the glad tidings unto those who are patient under affliction, even those who, when an affliction befalleth them, say, Verily we belong to God and verily unto Him shall we return. These, on them, are blessings from their Lord and grace, and these are they who are rightly guided."

In entire resignation to His Providence I comforted myself by often repeating after my prayers the words of the Holy Quran, "Sufficient unto us is God, and He is an Excellent Guardian. What an Excellent Protector, What an Excellent Helper," words, which gave me comfort, for, says the Quran:—

"Shall not hearts find repose in the remembrance of God?"

All my household soon gathered round me. The Vazir saheb too arrived, bewildered and confused,

* Nawab Imadulmulk's Translation of the Holy Quran.

and heaved a heavy sigh as his eye fell on the Nawab saheb's remains. The Nawabzadas sat close by their father's bedside and their eyes were pouring forth streams of tears. Nawabzada Hamidulla Khan, who was but seven years old, was fast asleep. When the sorrow fell upon us, we let him sleep and did not think it wise to disturb him, fearing lest his childish mind might suffer too great a shock. He rose in the morning to find himself fatherless. Bitterly he wept when told what had happened, and gave vent to his grief in vehement sobs which were uncontrollable though his elder brothers did their best to soothe and comfort him. The suddenness of the sorrow made it the harder to bear. Not the slightest medical assistance could I render, not for an hour could I tend him during his illness, not even in his last moments could I watch over him, and he was taken away. Everybody loved the Nawab saheb, and his virtues have passed into a proverb, but beyond the happiness which his house and family afforded him, very few worldly pleasures had come his way. My grand-mother's affection had brightened his childhood, and when she passed away, my mother's kindnesses had cheered him for a while, but everything changed when Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan appeared on the scene and his relentless hostility took the place of my mother's affection. Patiently and wisely he bore with Siddiq Hasan's machinations and all the distressing intrigues, but these had lasted their appointed time in the scheme of things, and had passed away. The clouds of unpleasantness and strife had lifted, and a new era had dawned—an era which appeared full of happiness

and promised opportunities for the use of his talents. The cup was in his grasp, but before his lips could touch it, death overtook him and it was dashed to the ground.

Ere the unhappy morning had flushed the sky with hues of silver and gold, the sad news had spread throughout the town, and people began to come in crowds to the Sadar-Manzil to ascertain if it was true. Yes, to my misfortune, it was but too true, and on hearing that it was so, many gave vent to cries of lamentation, and nothing but the noise of mourning was to be heard in and out of the palace. The Political Agent was informed by telegram, and arrived at 11 o'clock accompanied by Miss Blong the Lady doctor. The latter, after a careful examination of the body, attributed death to the bursting of the jugular vein and consequent failure of heart. At 4 in the afternoon Colonel Dane arrived, and he too was of the opinion that death was due to the bursting of a blood vessel. A half-smoked cigar, a glass of drinking water and the tobacco of the *hooka* found by the Nawab saheb's bedside, were taken away by Colonel Dane to be sent to Bombay for chemical examination.

For seven years the Nawab saheb had occasionally complained of pains in the region of the heart, which were more pronounced after violent exercise such as riding and hill-climbing. He was examined by Colonel Dane, the Agency Surgeon, and Dr. Joshi, the State Surgeon, but they assured him that there was no organic disease and no cause for anxiety. He continued to lose weight and the pain constantly returned. During the illness of my daughters Bilqis

Jahan and Asif Jahan, he had many opportunities of consulting famous hakeems and doctors, and used to study medical books himself. And though the doctors assured him that there was not the slightest cause for alarm, he had always taken a serious view of his symptoms, and often said that his disease would terminate fatally. We always tried to allay his fears by telling him that the doctors were absolutely sure that his heart was not affected, and that the symptoms were probably due to indigestion. Three years before his death, however, his health began to show remarkable improvement. He was getting stronger, and but five days before his death told me that the pain was much less and that he hoped it would soon entirely disappear. On the 20th Ramazan, he happened to raise a weight of about 20 seers from the ground. I was standing close by at the time, and saw that his colour suddenly changed and drops of perspiration stood on his forehead. I kept quiet, however, for he did not like being restrained from feats of strength. The following morning he complained of a little pain in the left shoulder, but on the day of his death the pain entirely disappeared, and he seemed to be in the best of health. After evening prayers he sat in the verandah talking to me about a horse which an Arab dealer had brought for him from Bombay. I was not feeling very well, so he told me "The fasts have begun to tell on you," and then went to sit out in another verandah, where he remained for about an hour, though it was mid-winter and the cold was severe. I went to him twice to ask him to come in, as it was very cold outside, but he was devoted to horses which he was talking about,

and did not move. I returned to my room, and after about an hour he went to the Humayun Manzil where he had some work to do. In the early hours of the morning he lay down to have a little rest, and intended getting up soon for the morning meal. But the call had come, and ere the hour had passed, he awoke, not in this, but in another world far away.

At about three in the afternoon all the arrangements for burial were complete and the bier left the Sadar-Manzil for the Hayat-Afza garden. The people of the city turned out in their thousands to follow my husband's body to the grave. The funeral prayers were read at the *Idgah*, and he was laid to rest in the Hayat-Afza garden by the side of his daughters.

From the waters of Death's mysterious ocean have come countless waves of grief and unhappiness, but on this occasion a storm of unusual severity burst upon me, a storm, that brought lasting sorrows and abiding regrets. All the arrangements for my sons' marriage celebration were upset, and the joyful anticipations gave way to heart-breaking disappointments. In the *shamiana* where but yesterday guests sat down to the evening meal, they now congregated to offer condolences. The day of the Nawab saheb's death was the day on which my second son was to finish his recitation of the Quran, an event to which my husband had been looking forward very keenly. Even this happiness he was not destined to share,for on account of some hitch in the arrangements, the final recitation had been postponed for a day. On the day following the funeral Obaidulla Khan recited the final portion of the Holy Quran. It was a sad and sorrowful ceremony—for he who had

set his heart upon it, was conspicuous by his absence. A pall of gloom seemed to hang over the assembly instead of the brilliance of illuminations and general rejoicings to which we had looked forward. As my son finished the sacred scriptures, he prayed for the merit of the holy task to be conferred on the soul of his dearly beloved father, the congregation, in a deep voice, saying 'Amen.'

As a mark of respect to the memory of my husband, the bazars and all the State offices remained closed for three days. On the 27th of Ramazan, I received a final visit of condolence from Major Impey, the Political Agent, who talked long to me of the many eminent qualities of my husband, and told me that Lord Curzon had asked him to express His Excellency's deepest sympathy with me in my sorrow. Letters and telegrams of condolence were received from Colonel Meade, Resident in Baroda, Colonel Barr, Resident in Hyderabad, and Mr. Robertson, Resident in Mysore, and numerous other friends. A telegram of condolence was also received from the Temperance Society of Sehore, and at Aligarh a meeting of the Staff and students of the M. A. O. College was held in the Strachey hall to express sympathy with me in my grief, and a telegram of condolence was sent to me by Nawab Mohsinul Mulk, the Honorary Secretary of the College. For my husband's spiritual benefit I had his* *Haj-Badal* performed, and that my mother and daughter may also share the rewards of the holy pilgrimage, I had their *Haj-Badal*,

* *Haj-Badal* is a vicarious pilgrimage to Mecca performed for the benefit of those who cannot, owing to unavoidable circumstances, undertake the pilgrimage themselves.

too, performed at the same time. I had my mother's *Haj-Badal* performed because when, in my childhood, I had once fallen seriously ill, she had, upon my recovery, a similar pilgrimage performed for my benefit. The three persons sent to Mecca for *Haj-Badal* were Maulvi Abdul Haq, Kamdar of my husband's *deorhi*, Maulvi Abdul Rahman and Maulvi Azam Husain.

Countless elegies and poems were written on my husband's death, and notable amongst them was the chronogram in Persian composed by Munshi Jamil Ahmed of my office :—

> Nawab Ahmed Ali Khan, alas ! thy sudden death
> Is a terrible affliction, and the world is weeping;
> Peace to thy soul, sorrows and enemy's breath
> Touch thee not, thou art peacefully sleeping.
> Jamil with a heart burning like fire,
> Sings this verse on his mournful lyre,
> On thee may God His blessings shower,
> Thy home be Paradise forever.

The Nawab saheb's *jagir* reverted to the State, and his movable property was divided amongst his sons. The Sadar Manzil Palace which was built by the Nawab saheb, and a certain sum of money deposited by him in the State treasury are still in my possession. The entire property left by him at Jelalabad (Muzaffarnagar district) was, with the approval of my elder sons, transferred to my youngest son, Hamidulla Khan. I had renounced all claims to my dower money during my husband's life time.

CHAPTER IV

EARLY DIFFICULTIES

IT was necessary for me soon to acquaint myself thoroughly with the state of things in the districts, but my preoccupations at the capital did not, for some time, admit of my undertaking a tour. I intended sending Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk in my place, for his report on the work of the district officials would have been extremely valuable, but his presence was necessary at headquarters during the early days of my rule, as I needed his advice upon the important matters which claimed my attention. I had hardly been six months on the *masnad* when he died.

Islam lays down very strict rules to be observed by widows. During the period of mourning, which lasts for 4 months and 10 days, a widow is not permitted to wear ornaments or new garments. The use of oil for the hair is forbidden, and barring absolutely unavoidable circumstances, she is strictly prohibited from leaving the house in which her husband has died, and from holding converse with anybody outside the circle of her nearest relations. The observance of the last rule was not incumbent on me in view of my position as a Ruler, but all others I complied with most scrupulously.

The days of mourning are sad enough in ordinary circumstances, but to my sorrow were added the anxieties of the work of administration. Everything

pointed to the urgent necessity of reforms, and the serious grievances of the people called for immediate redress, but to whom was I to turn for practical assistance? My husband on whose advice I could rely above that of all others in the State, was dead, and my readers can imagine what his loss meant to me at that juncture. From the other members of my family I could look for no assistance. The old ones were gone, and the store-house of their experience, which would have been a source of strength to me at that difficult time, had been buried with them. The younger ones lacked both knowledge and experience. Few old servants of the State, moreover, were capable enough to enlighten me with regard to the usages and customs of the State. Bakhshi Mohammad Hasan and Diwan Thakur Parshad had, it is true, grown old in Her late Highness' service, but the greater part of their service had been spent in the *deorhis*, and their experience of State departments was very limited. The only person who could have rendered me really useful assistance was the Minister of the State. A man of excellent judgment and ripe experience, whose services under the British Government had been highly spoken of, he was well fitted to share the burden of responsibility and help me with sage advice, but to my misfortune he was obsessed with the idea that my active interest in administrative matters was detrimental to his authority and incompatible with his position as the full-powered Minister. He regarded the work of administration as beyond the Ruler's province, and the true role of the latter in his opinion was not to guide the Minister, but to sit as

a learner at his feet. To my distress at the terrible bereavement I had suffered, were thus added the anxieties of administration and in times of doubt and difficulty I often spoke and wrote to Mr. Lang whose sympathy was very comforting, and whose advice always helpful.

As a relief from my worries, I had, during my mother's lifetime, once thought of leaving Bhopal for some time. A Musalmân's heart, when torn with grief, naturally turns to the holy city of Medina—the city which gave refuge to our Prophet (hallowed be his name) and which has been called "the abode of peace" by the "Giver of Life and peace" in His Book. Disappointed and depressed as I was, as a consequence of the unhappy events of My mother's rule, events, with which the readers of the first volume are familiar, I had informed Her Highness of my intention to proceed on a pilgrimage to the Hedjaz. My daughter Asif-Jehan was indisposed at that time, and I intended taking her to Bombay, thinking that the change would do her good, and I would there have the advantage of consulting well-known experts. From Bombay, I thought, I would have no difficulty in obtaining Her Highness' sanction to proceed to the Hedjaz, and accomplish my heart's desire.

In times of grief and despair man turns instinctively to his Creator; in Him alone he finds true refuge from his sorrows, and real solace in his distress. In my opinion one of the sweet uses of adversity is the closer communion of the human soul with God's light. And God is nearer to us than everything else in the world, for does He not say

in the Holy Quran "Verily, I am nearer to you than your jugular vein." He alone, by His infinite power, can change things and so order circumstances, that happiness is restored to the afflicted, and sorrows are drowned in the river of destruction.

"When he willeth a thing to be, He says 'Be,' and it is."

While Asif Jahan lay on her deathbed, an intense longing had grown up in me to soothe my sorrows by a visit to the sacred shrine of Mecca and to the other city where lie the holy remains of the best and greatest of all mankind. For the Prophet has commanded "Having prepared for the pilgrimage, let your steps be turned to the sacred house of Kaaba, to Jerusalem, and to Medina, which is my abode."

Circumstances unfortunately compelled me to abandon my intended visit to Bombay with Asif-Jehan, and the idea of the pilgrimage had also to be postponed. "Everything" says the Quran "waits for its appointed hour." Often did I speak to Nawab Ehtashamul Mulk on the matter, and we were both agreed that the Haj being incumbent on us, we should take an early opportunity of discharging our obligation.

I may mention here that Islam enjoins the fulfilment of five obligations :

1. Belief in the Unity of God and in Mohammad as His Prophet.
2. Regularity in prayers.
3. The giving of *zakat* (alms).
4. The performance of the pilgrimage to Mecca.
5. The observance of the Ramazan.

It is every Musalman's firm conviction that those who fail to perform any ot these obligations shall merit severe punishment on the day of judgment. By the grace of God I had fulfilled to the best of my power all the above obligations with the exception of the pilgrimage, the performance of which was postponed owing to circumstances over which I had no control. But now all had changed. The desire for the pilgrimage was as strong in me as ever, and those whose permission was necessary for me but a short while ago, had departed. All that was needed was the consent of the Government of India, and I was sure that there would be little difficulty in obtaining it, as the British rule allows religious freedom to everybody. Accordingly I told the Political Agent when he paid a condolence visit to me after the Nawab saheb's death, that I intended performing the pilgrimage soon after the celebration of my sons' wedding festival, for I was afraid it would be difficult for me to discharge this important religious obligation later on when the work of administration engrossed my thoughts.

The following *kharita* was accordingly despatched to His Excellency the Viceroy on the 22nd of Ziqad 1319 A. H. (March 3rd 1902).

"After compliments: Your Excellency is well aware that it is incumbent on every well-to-do Musalman to visit the holy city of Mecca and perform the sacred rites of the pilgrimage. I have long wished to visit the holy places of the Hedjaz but various circumstances have hitherto prevented me. The sudden death of my lamented husband, Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk has caused me unspeakable grief,

and, following upon other bereavements, has told on my health. In these circumstances a journey to Mecca would, I am sure, prove beneficial, for in addition to performing a religious obligation, I would, I hope, be improving my health by the sea-voyage. I, therefore, earnestly request the Government of India kindly to consent to my absence from the State for a period of seven or eight months. On my return I shall devote myself zealously and energetically to discharging the responsibility laid on me by the Almighty, of promoting the well-being of the State and my people. My younger sons, Sahebada Obaidulla Khan and Sahebzada Hamidulla Khan will accompany me, and I shall need the services of a European doctor as far as the port of Jedda just as on a previous occasion my grandmother Nawab Sikandar Begam was accompanied by Dr. Thomson. The Vazir saheb will, in consultation with the other high officials, carry on the work of administration entrusted to him. I have made no arrangements as yet regarding my own official work, for I shall not be leaving till October next, and, in the meanwhile, I shall be able to give careful consideration to the matter and judge of the capabilities of my successor, Nawab Nasrulla Khan, whom I propose to leave in Bhopal. Shortly before my departure I intend to put the new arrangements into operation, and before coming to any decision on these matters, I shall take all the circumstances into consideration, in order that the administrative machinery may work smoothly and uninterruptedly during my absence. I will look forward to being honoured with a favourable reply from Your Excellency at an early date."

In reply to this *kharita* I received a *yad-dasht* from the Political Agent to the effect that the Government of India would be glad if I could defer my departure for the Hedjaz until after the celebration of the King Emperor's coronation at Delhi. The Government informed me that it would give them pleasure to accede to my request for a European medical officer accompanying me as far as Jedda. As it was not religiously incumbent on me to make the pilgrimage immediately, and the coronation of the King-Emperor at Delhi was a unique occasion, I decided to take part in the historic celebration, and visit the Hedjaz in the following year.

Mr. Lang, who during his three years' tenure of office as Political Agent, had acquired an intimate knowledge of the local conditions, was at this time transferred, and Major Impey took his place. Major Impey had occupied a post in the Bhopal Agency before this, and had, in the course of his short stay, extended great courtesy and kindness to everybody with whom he came in contact. It was a pleasure to me to renew our acquaintance, and in those difficult days I often spoke to him about my anxieties. He always listened to me with genuine sympathy, and I will never forget his words of comfort and encouragement. "Begam saheba," he would say, "Rome was not built in a day; with patience and perseverance you will conquer all difficulties. Go slow, look into everything most carefully, think deep before you decide matters of importance, and God will help you." Though beset with cares and anxieties, I persevered in what I considered to be the path of my duty, and looked

upon my work as a means of alleviating my sorrows. After having carefully examined the needs of the miscellaneous departments, I gave orders for well thought-out plans being drafted for the reorganisation of each and every department of the State.

The one thing, which was above all things important, was the work of settlement. It claimed my immediate attention, for the abuses which were rife in the Revenue department in consequence of the chaotic condition of *patwaris'* registers, could not be corrected, unless the work of revenue settlement was carried out on up-to-date lines. Previous to being appointed Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, Colonel Barr held the post of Boundary demarcation officer at Sehore for some time, and in view of his intimate knowledge of the local conditions, I wrote and asked him if he could suggest an experienced officer to take charge of the work of settlement in Bhopal. He advised me to appoint Maulvi Syed Ali Hasan Khan, who came to Bhopal, and was presented to me by the Vazir saheb. But as the Maulvi saheb did not see his way to accept the salary offered to him, and the finances of the State did not admit of his wishes in this respect being met, the proposal fell through. The Vazir saheb, moreover, did not favour Moulvi Ali Hasan's appointment. It can hardly be gainsaid that the work of the Revenue department everywhere largely depends on the condition of the papers of *patwaris* and *kanungos*. Under Her late Highness' orders a school had been established for the training of *patwaris*, but the management of the institution was vested in the

then Vazir, and the officer-in-charge being a brother of the Naib Vazir, the post soon became a sinecure, and a means of extracting benefits from the *patwaris*. That the aim with which the school was established, was never fulfilled, was therefore hardly a matter of surprise. The condition of the *patwaris'* registers was so bad that no information of any value could be gleaned from them, and even ten years' hard work had not enabled the Revenue department to evolve order out of the chaos. The posts of *patwaris* and *kanungos* were regarded as hereditary, and training and experience were considered of so little account, that in some cases infants and five-year-old children were shown in the papers as having succeeded to their fathers' posts, and the actual work was done by substitutes nominated by their families. Such were the unhappy consequences of the power of appointment and dismissal having been vested in absolute Ministers.

The inconsistencies revealed by the papers of the Accounts Office, the Revenue department and the district offices were little short of amazing. The revenue of a certain village would be shown as Rs. 2,000 in one office, as Rs. 1,500 in another, and the actual receipts as a hundred rupees in the third. And throughout this period, be it remembered, there was a Settlement Officer who drew a big salary from the State treasury, and had an army of subordinates and a huge office establishment. A gentlemen of the name of Mahomed Ishaq held the post when I assumed the reins of administration.

Diwan Thakur Pershad, Bakhshi Mohamad Hasan, Munshi Qudrat Ali, Munshi Enayat Husain Khan

and Munshi Badrul Hasan were all old and experienced servants of the State. Each and all of them I consulted as to the proposed period of settlement, and they were unanimously of the opinion that the next settlement should be a provisional one. Such a settlement, they said, could be utilized by the State to put an end to the confusion which existed in the village records, and devise means for a longer settlement on well-thought-out principles. I also ascertained the views of Munshi Israr Hasan Khan in the matter, for he too was well conversant with the local circumstances, and had lately been associated with the work of a short settlement in British India. He too entirely agreed with the opinion of the other officers on the ground that village records and settlement papers should be in a satisfactory condition before a long settlement was attempted. On important matters my grandmother Nawab Sikandar Begum always consulted not only the high officials, but the *jagirdars* also, especially those to whose views she attached great weight owing to their loyalty and experience. Following this precedent I took Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Sahebzada Obaidulla Khan into consultation. True, they had no practical experience of the work of administration till then, but their education had been well looked after, and to profit by their strong commonsense and encourage their practical interest in administrative matters, I thought it advisable to invite an expression of their views on the vitally important question of settlement. They submitted a detailed memorandum to me on the subject, and expressed themselves in entire

agreement with the views of the officials. There being a consensus of opinion on the matter, it only remained for me to settle the period of the proposed settlement. I ordered the file to be kept waiting pending the arrival of the new Moinul Moham, for whose appointment I had moved the Central India Agency.

The work of the collection of revenue arrears, however, was taken up immediately, for the need was pressing in view of the depleted condition of the State treasury. For this work an honest and reliable man was required. Munshi Israr Hasan Khan at this time paid a condolence visit to Bhopal. He had served the State when my mother was living, and in view of his reputation for honesty, and the favourable opinion entertained about him by the late Nawab saheb, I observed to him in the course of an interview that I should be glad to borrow his services from the Government of India, if he had no objection. He welcomed the suggestion subject to the approval of the Government. As he had served under Colonel Ward for a number of years, I wrote and asked the latter's opinion about him. Colonel Ward's reply being highly favourable, I lost no time in addressing a formal letter to the Government of the United Provinces for the loan of Israr Hasan Khan's services. The Khan Bahadur soon joined his appointment at Bhopal, and was put in charge of the collection of revenue arrears.

Along with means of material progress, the needs of educational advancement claimed my attention. Her late Highness had established the "Madrasa-i-Shahjehani" for the boys of the ruling family,

but in spite of all her endeavours to place means of education within easy reach of the boys of higher classes, the school did not prosper, for conservative prejudices were deeply rooted, and the knowledge that Western learning was indispensable in the new order of things, had not yet dawned on the people. A few boys joined the Shahjehani school, but petitions for exemption from regular attendance and from payment of fees, soon began to flow in a steady stream to Her Highness. In these circumstances the school could not live, and its doors had soon to be closed. Her Highness then reorganised the old Sulaimania school, and provided suitable buildings and an excellent staff, hoping that the general public would prove more appreciative of the blessings of knowledge. About fifty or sixty *madrasas* were also opened in the *mofussil*. These endeavours, however, were little more fruitful than ploughing the sands. The total number of school boys in a population of about ten lakhs was 2,877, although a sum of Rs. 16,626 was annually given in scholarships to encourage attendance. Shortly before her death Her Highness attempted once more to make education popular. A special permanent department named "*Nazaratul Maarifal Amumia*" was established, and a society called "*Moeen-Nazaratul Maarif*" was founded to co-operate in the work of propaganda, but soon afterwards began Her Highness' unfortunate indisposition which was to end fatally. What could be a greater misfortune for the people of Bhopal than to lose a priceless boon as well as the hand which held it out.

The budget was another important matter. It was absolutely necessary that expenditure should

be controlled and brought within the limits of the annual income. I asked the Vazir saheb to give immediate attention to the matter, and expedite the submission of the new estimates to me. After some unavoidable delays, I saw the papers which were still incomplete, and, after careful consideration, cut down the monthly expenditure from 2 lakhs to a lakh and a half. Munshi Imtiaz Ali Khan, a previous Vazir, had attempted to prepare the State budget on modern lines, but the administrative machine moved so slowly in those days, that when his tenure of office came to an end, the budget was still in the confusion in which he had found it. Then came Moulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, who did not essay the task at all, and *laissez faire* being the traditional policy till then of the office of the Accountant-General of the State, it was hardly surprising that the confusion in Accounts office became worse confounded, and when I succeeded to the *masnad*, I found that the accounts of the last 22 years had not been adjusted. I gave my personal attention to the matter, and the task being arduous, I knew that with patience and perseverance alone could success be achieved.

My elder sons had now come of age, and the time was not distant when they were to take up their residence separately. This could not be done unless they were allotted *jagirs* for their maintenance. At this time the two jagirs of my husband and myself, yielding annual incomes of Rs. 40,000 and Rs. 90,000 respectively, had reverted to the State. The State finances being in an unsatisfactory condition, I did not wish to add to the existing burden another formidable item in the shape of big

jagirs, so with due regard both to the position of my sons and the interests of economy, I added Rs. 17,000 to the *jagir* income which had reverted to the State, and sanctioned a total grant of Rs. 1,40,000 divided into three separate allotments as follows:—

	Rs. a.p.
To Nawab Nasrulla Khan	62,661 0 3
To Sahebzada Obaidulla Khan ..	53,500 1 6
To Sahebzada Hamidulla Khan ..	30,807 0 6

Nawab Nasrulla Khan, as mentioned in a previous chapter, had submitted a written agreement according to the custom of the State, when he was formally recognised as Heir-Apparent. Hamidulla Khan was only seven years old at this time. Obaidulla Khan, however, signed an agreement similar to that signed by his elder brother, but containing the following two additional clauses:—

(1) I promise to obey and respect my elder brother as long as he treats me with kindness and affection. I promise to treat my younger brother with affection and courtesy.

(2) In compliance with the injunctions of Islam and the oft-repeated wish of my parents, I promise never to forget any part of the Holy Quran the whole of which I have learnt by heart.

From the petitions that were reaching me at this time, and from what I heard from reliable sources, it was obvious to me that the maladministration of the *mofussil* districts, which was aggravated by the corruption of officials, needed serious attention. The circumstances called for an immediate tour of

the districts, but as it was impossible for me to leave Bhopal owing to the period of mourning,* I saw no alternative but that my sons should be sent instead. And though the Vazir saheb was opposed to the idea and the hot weather had set in, I sent Nawab Nasrulla Khan on a tour of the Northern and Western districts, and Sahebzada Obaidulla Khan on a tour of the Southern and Eastern. I was sure that their tours would help me to know the true state of affairs, and at the same time give my sons useful practical experience. Before the Sahebzadas started I caused a proclamation to be published, printed copies of which were sent to all the villages of the State. In this I called upon the people freely and fearlessly to lay their grievances before the Sahebzadas. I personally drew up the tour programmes, and drafted detailed instructions for my sons. With the exception of the Western district, there were no metalled roads in the *mofussil*, and it would have taken a long time for temporary roads to be constructed. I therefore gave orders that the Sahebzadas were to ride over the distances which could not otherwise be traversed, and their halt was nowhere to be extended beyond the necessity of the place, as the harvest operations having commenced, I did not wish the cultivators to be unduly inconvenienced. I, moreover, wanted my sons at Bhopal as soon as possible for their marriage festival.

The Sahebzadas started on the 25th of April 1902, and from every place which they visited, submitted detailed reports to me about the condition of crops, the thana and tehsil offices, the accounts registers

GENERAL OBAIDULLA KHAN.

and treasury balances, the schools, dispensaries and all other departments and offices which they inspected. They received about sixty thousand applications altogether, and these, with the notes and explanations of the district officers, were forwarded to me for orders. On the 12th of Safar Sahebzada Obaidulla Khan returned from tour by rail, having taken train at Budhni. As this was his first tour, I ordered arrangements for a reception befitting his position being made. He was met at the railway station by members of the ruling family and the State officials, prominent among whom were Sahebzada Hamidulla Khan, the *Mir Bakhshi*, the *Kamdar* of *Deorhi Khas*, and the Judicial and Revenue Assistants. State Troops, both foot and horse, were in attendance outside the station, and the Band was also present. When the Sahebzada entered the city, a salute of five guns was fired from the Fatehgarh fort. On the 19th Safar Nawab Nasrulla Khan returned to Bhopal on the completion of his tour. He too was accorded a similar reception, and as he came by road, he was met at the Chor Imli, a place about 3 miles from the city, by Sahebzadas Obaidulla Khan and Hamidulla Khan, and the high officials of the State. On his entry into the city a salute of seven guns was fired.

The tours of the Sahebzadas were a great help to me, and the expectations I had entertained when I wished God-speed to them, were entirely fulfilled. Both of them carried out my instructions with meticulous care, and the courtesy which they extended alike to the *jagirdar* and the humble ryot, the sympathy with which they heard everybody

who had anything to say, and above all the very fact of the Ruler's sons having undertaken a tour of all the villages of the State, could not but be regarded by the people generally as an earnest of my active interest in their well being, and by the corrupt and dishonest officials as the closure of the door to wrong practices. A few officials whose incapability was borne out by careful investigation, were dismissed, while others whose honesty and ability furnished a notable contrast, were rewarded with increments in salary and robes of honour.

CHAPTER V

Marriages of my Sons—Festivities

The marriage celebration of my sons was one of the urgent matters that claimed my attention after my installation. With the agreement of Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk Alijah, the 7th Shawwal had been fixed for the ceremony, and the preliminary banquets were being held, when suddenly on the 22nd the Nawab saheb's death upset all arrangements. When the period of mourning was over, I decided to hold the celebration as soon as possible after the return of the Sahebzadas from tour, and fixed the 29th of Safar 1320 A. H. for the ceremony. The late Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk had intended to celebrate the weddings on a scale befitting the rank and position of his sons. It was his wish that the marriage procession should start from the Hayat Afza garden, and arrangements for decorations, illuminations and fireworks had been made on a magnificent scale in connection with the progress of the procession to the palace of the brides, and from there to the Sadar Manzil. I proposed to carry out the late Nawab saheb's plans in their entirety, but the Sahebzadas approached me together, and with great respect craved permission to say that even a year had not elapsed since their beloved father's death, and their eyes were not yet dry, so they desired that there should be no pomp and display on the occasion of their wedding celebration, and that all ceremonies should be conduct-

ed with rigorous simplicity. I agreed to their wish, for the lamp which would have lent brilliance to the celebration was extinguished, and our hearts were heavy. The arrangements had long been complete. They were taken in hand as soon as the betrothal took place, and what little remained to be done, was attended to soon after the *nikah*. I had had ample time during the last two and a half years to arrange from my private *deorhi* for everything that was required. The idea of a magnificent procession was given up, but the arrangements concerning dinner parties, gifts, rewards, *joras*, etc., were maintained as intended by the late Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk, for a celebration such as this was an occasion to which so many of our friends, servants, and dependants had been looking forward for a long time.

Invitations to the celebration were sent to the Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, Major Impey, the Political Agent, and other European ladies and gentlemen. I also invited several Chiefs and nobles who had friendly relations with the State. Invitations were also sent to the relations of the late Nawab saheb at Jalalabad. At my request Major Impey, the Political Agent, arrived at Bhopal a week previously, and rendered me most valuable assistance in connection with the arrangements for the entertainment of the European guests. On the 22nd Safar *joras* were distributed to the office establishments of the *Deorhi Khas*, Gardens and Karkhana departments in the presence of Sahebzada Hamidulla Khan, who took the keenest interest in the supervision of the arrangements connected with the celebration. A few days

later a Darbar was held at the Sadar Manzil Palace at which members of the ruling family and the civil and military officers of the State received robes of honour, and the two bridegrooms were given *khillats* with swords of honour and pearl necklaces in recognition of the valuable work done by them in the course of their recent tours. At the conclusion of the ceremony I made the following speech :—

Gentlemen,—This ceremony in which we are taking part to-day is one to which I have been looking forward for several years, but there is an appointed hour for everything in this world, and nothing can happen except at the time and in the manner in which God wills it to be. Who knew that this celebration would take place without the Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk Alijah, Nazirud Dowlah Sultan Dulha, Nawab Ahmad Ali Khan Bahadur, who, in all things and at all times, was my companion and helper, and whose wisdom, I hoped, would lighten for me the burden of administration. May God rest his soul in Paradise and soothe our afflicted hearts. Everything in connection with this celebration is being done according to the plan decided upon by the late Nawab saheb and myself during the days when I was still the Heir-Apparent, and you will, I am sure, be interested to learn that all the expenses of these ceremonies are being borne by the *Deorhi Khas*, and not, as has heretofore been the custom on such occasions, by the State. The present condition of the State finances is well known to you. The very first month after my accession the State treasury was unable to meet the salary-bills of State servants, and the difficulty was tided over by an advance being made from th

Deorhi Khas. The circumstances, therefore, made it imperative, that the expenses of the State, which greatly exceeded the revenues, should be cut down. I mention this not as a reflection on the administrative methods of my predecessors, but as an illustration of the difficulties which have had to be met. From the day I have assumed the reins of government, my sole anxiety has been to promote the welfare of my people, and introduce reforms where reforms seemed necessary. These objects are not easy of accomplishment, and this is no occasion for me to tell you what difficulties still remain to be conquered. I intended making a tour of the State personally, but Providence willed otherwise, and I could not leave Bhopal. I sent my well beloved sons, Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Sahebzada Obaidulla Khan, to enquire into the condition of my people, and despite the severity of the hot weather, they carried out my instructions, and, within a short space of time, have submitted detailed reports replete with valuable information. These reports have had my careful consideration, and necessary steps will soon be taken to correct the abuses and irregularities which have been brought to my knowledge. I have every reason to hope and believe that the Vazir Sahib and other officials will help me with their valuable advice, and in so doing they will not only be affording me genuine pleasure, but also contributing to the material prosperity of the State. I must say a word in appreciation of the valuable work of the Sahebzadas, and, in recognition thereof, I hereby bestow on them robes and swords of honour and necklaces of pearls."

On the 28th of Safar the Bodyguard Cavalry drew up in line in the Sadar Manzil square, and each of the officers and men was awarded a silver plume by me to be worn in front of the head dress. In memory of the late Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk, the Cavalry was, on this occasion, given the name "Ehtashamia." Before presenting the *kalghi*, I delivered the following speech :—

"*Mir Bakhshi* sahib Nasrat Jang, Mirza Karim Beg, Commandant Victoria Lancers, and civil and military officers,—It is scarcely necessary to say what a grievous loss the State and its people have suffered by the death of Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk Alijah Nazirud Dowlah Nawab Ahmad Ali Khan Bahadur. A mine of virtues by the favour of Providence and gifted with wisdom, sound commonsense, sympathy and a keen sense of justice, he was, above all things, a born soldier, and signs of inefficiency in the State Troops pained him greatly. Hence his endeavours to improve the administration of the Military department, and his desire to enhance the value and prestige of all troops, both Regular and Irregular. The Bodyguard Cavalry, as you know, had the first place in his affections, and having bent his energies, first and foremost, to raising the efficiency of this unit, he achieved remarkable success in a short space of time. Apart from its discipline and training, the handsome turn-out of the Cavalry to-day is an eloquent tribute to the late Nawab saheb's endeavours, and it is only fitting that the unit should henceforward be called 'Ehtashamia' in remembrance of his gracious patronage. While giving you this name, which I trust you will always cherish with sentiments

of loyalty and affection, I wish to present this plume also to remind you always of this happy occasion. I am sure that my sons, and particularly Sahibzada Obaidulla Khan, who is being given a military training, will always be interested in the well being of the State troops and spare no means to raise their efficiency to the level of the Victoria Lancers. In this respect I have great hopes from the loyalty and assistance of the *Mir Bakshi* sahib Bahadur, who has always been a most capable and faithful servant of the State. It is my wish that my troops may be fit, when the call of the British Government or of the State comes, to take their place alongside of the Imperial Service Lancers. I will take this opportunity to express appreciation of the services of Captain Abdul Qayyum Khan, and bestow on him the badge of Ehtashamia with a plume of pearls, in recognition of the good work he has done in so short a time. If similar zeal is shown by the other military officers, I am sure I will soon have the satisfaction of seeing all my troops in a condition which will greatly enhance their *izzat*, and be a source of pride and pleasure to the State. In conclusion I pray to the Almighty that he may grant me strength to bear the burden laid on me, and that Heaven's light may always guide the servants of the State in the path of loyalty and goodwill."

On the 29th Safar, Mr. and Mrs. Bayley arrived accompanied by their staff and a few ladies and gentlemen from Indore. As the weather was hot, and I was anxious for the comfort of my guests, I sent my own saloon for them to Ujjain, the terminus of the broad-gauge line from Bhopal. Mr. Bayley's arrival being private, I deputed the Vazir saheb

to meet the party at the station on my behalf, and gave orders for a guard of honour and a military escort being present at the station. All my guests assembled at the Gauhar Mahal in the evening to witness the marriage procession. The idea of a grand procession starting from the Hayat Afza garden had been given up, and the ceremony shorn of all pageantry. The troops with the elephants and the *mahi-maratib* were in attendance in the Shaukat Mahal square, which had been brilliantly illuminated with multi-coloured lights. The bridegrooms, mounted on elephants, started from their respective residences, the Shaukat Mahal and the Humayun Manzil, and came to the Gauhar Mahal where I had arrived previously. The European ladies were received at the Gauhar Mahal, and were greatly interested in the ceremonies which took place. Seating accommodation to watch the marriage procession had been arranged for the European and other guests at the Shahjahani, Sultani, Qudsi and Sikandri gates which overlooked the route of the procession. Providence had been very indulgent, and the oppressive heat greatly relieved by a merciful shower. The usual ceremonies were observed at the house of the brides, and on behalf of the State I presented them with the *joras* given to me at the time of my marriage. My grandmother Nawab Sikandar Begam had given her robes to my mother, who had honoured me with a similar compliment at the time of my marriage. It is an old Indian custom that the bridegroom's parents send costly robes for the bride when she leaves her house.

The *valima* banquet was held on the 1st of Rabiul

Awwal, and all nobles, *jagirdars*, officials, vakils, munshis, and students of the local schools were invited. Even those servants of the State, whose services had been dispensed with as a result of the reductions made in office establishments, were not forgotten on this occasion, for these reductions were dictated by considerations of economy, and not by any fault of these unfortunate people. In the evening a tea party was held at the Sadat Manzil Palace. Although the original programme of the marriage festivities had been greatly curtailed in accordance with my sons' wishes, I yet did everything in my power for the comfort and enjoyment of my guests. That Mr. Bayley, and other ladies and gentlemen, in spite of pressing calls on their time, should have undertaken a tiring railway journey in hot weather, made me feel the more grateful to them for their kindness and courtesy, and there is no doubt that it was the presence of my European guests which helped to dispel the gloom which seemed to have settled over us since the late Nawab saheb's death. For they brought a cheerful atmosphere with them, and it was a real pleasure to talk to them. At about seven in the evening all the European guests and high officials of the State assembled at the Palace. Fruits and refreshments were served, and throughout the evening the State Band played a selection of delightful music. A guard of honour was also drawn up in the palace square. It was a most enjoyable party, and we did not disperse till the dinner hour.

The following afternoon I was "At Home" on the parade ground, and a most pleasant time was spent

in witnessing the whirlwind tent-pegging and other brilliant feats of horsemanship performed by the Imperial Service Troops and the Bodyguard Cavalry. In the evening a banquet was held at the Lal Kothi, and the entire route from the Sadar Manzil to the Kothi garden was tastefully illuminated. Paper lanterns and coloured lights shining in the trees and the foliage plants of the Lal Kothi garden made a wonderful sight. Accompanied by the Sahebzadas and the Vazir saheb, I arrived at the Kothi after dinner, and in the following speech proposed the toast of the health of Mr. and Mrs. Bayley :—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—My first duty is to render thanks to Almighty God for having placed the reins of government in my hands during the reign of a just and merciful Emperor, under whose benign protection we live in happiness and contentment. I must also express my sincere thankfulness to the Hon'ble Mr. and Mrs. Bayley and my other guests, who despite the discomforts of the hot weather, have, for my sake, come to Bhopal to take part in the marriage celebration of my sons. I am particularly indebted to the Political Agent for the exceedingly useful help he has given me in all matters connected with this celebration. The ceremonies in which we have taken part, have been under contemplation for the last three years, and my late husband Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk Alijah, whose co-operation and support were to me a priceless blessing, looked forward to the day when you would honour him with a visit to take part in the rejoicings. God, alas, willed otherwise, for when the day has come, he who elaborated all details with

fond hopes, is conspicuous by his absence. Arrangements for these ceremonies were completed while I was still the Heir-Apparent, and you will, I believe, be interested to learn that all expenses of the festival have been borne by my private *jagir*, for though it has heretofore been the custom for such celebrations to be held at State expense, I have considered it advisable to make a departure in the present case owing to the financial condition of the State being far from satisfactory. I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, that your presence in these days has greatly mitigated the effects of the sorrow to which I have referred, and given a greatly needed touch of happiness and joy. It is also a happy coincidence that this month has witnessed two other celebrations of great interest and importance to us: I refer to the accomplishment in this month of the conquest of the Transval, and the auspicious Coronation of our King-Emperor. This is an omen of felicity and good fortune to all loyal adherents of the British Crown. I will now conclude my speech with the prayer that God may grant all happiness to our King-Emperor, and bless me and my descendants with steadfast devotion to his Empire. Allow me to request you, one and all, to drink to the long life and happiness of the King-Emperor and his Consort, and to the health and prosperity of my distinguished guests, Mr. and Mrs. Bayley."

In reply the Hon'ble Mr. Bayley made the following speech :—

"Your Highness,—Your Highness understands English so well, that I trust that you will allow me to reply in my own language to the very kind words

THE HON. MR. C. S. BAYLEY.

in which you have been good enough to propose my health and that of Mrs. Bayley. You have thanked us and Your Highness' other guests for coming here at this season of the year, but I am sure that all present will feel with me that the thanks are due not from, but to Your Highness for your most friendly invitations and for the bounteous hospitality which you have extended to us all. I feared at first that, owing to pressure of other duties, I should not be able to come to Bhopal; but when your Highness' wishes were repeated in terms of such unmistakable cordiality and sincerity, I felt that other considerations must give way, and that my duty, as well as my inclinations, would be best fulfilled by joining in the festivities with which you are celebrating the marriages of your two eldest sons. I should like to express in fitting terms the sorrow which we all feel that the Nawab Consort has, by the inscrutable decree of Providence, to which all must bow, not been spared to rejoice with us over the completion of the marriages which it gave him and Your Highness so much pleasure to arrange. But I will not dwell on this sad subject now, and will only say that I am sure that in all Your Highness has done, you have merely followed his wishes. This is specially true of the wise and generous decision by which you have determined that no portion of the expense of the ceremonies shall fall on the revenues of the Bhopal State, which have suffered severely of late years. Your Highness has said with perfect truth that these weddings have taken place at a particularly auspicious time, falling, as they do, between the conclusion of the war in which the British Empire

has been so long engaged, and the Coronation of our Most Gracious Sovereign, King Edward VII. We all trust that the Empire will be blessed with peace and prosperity throughout His Majesty's reign, and that these blessings may be enjoyed to the full by the Bhopal State, which stands second to none in India in loyalty and devotion to the Crown. It is our fervent hope that Your Highness may live long to govern your territories with wisdom and justice, and that, from the unions which have now been celebrated, there may spring a long line of Chiefs no less distinguished for loyalty and good government than those who have preceded them.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you most heartily on behalf of Mrs. Bayley and myself for the cordial manner in which you have received the toast which the Begam has proposed, and I ask you to join with me in drinking Her Highness' health, and I hope she will allow me to couple with hers the name of her sons, Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Sahebzada Obaidulla Khan."

On the 2nd Rabiul-Awwal Mr. and Mrs. Bayley left for Indore, and the Political Agent departed two days later. Some newspaper correspondents also visited Bhopal on this occasion, and were awarded the usual *joras* and monetary gifts. They were accommodated with the other guests in the gardens outside the city, and all necessary arrangements for their comfort were made. When an Indian bride leaves for her husband's house, her parents usually present to her furniture and other articles for use in her new home. The requirements of my sons' houses, however, were not of the ordinary kind, so on

the first Friday after the wedding ceremony I made an equal provision for both of them of suitable furniture and other requisites for their palaces. No marriage of a son of the Ruler of Bhopal had been celebrated for a hundred years, and on the present occasion I followed the precedent of what was done by my mother at the time of my own marriage.

CHAPTER VI

Resignation of the State Vazir—Ministerial Powers—New Appointments

I had built great hopes on the co-operation of Moulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, C.I.E., the State Vazir, whose experience ranged over a wide field of administration, and who was, above all others, pre-eminently fitted to further my endeavours. My hopes could not unfortunately be realised on account of the difference in our points of view. Soon after my installation when I began to see with my own eyes what I had previously only heard from a distance, I realised the imperative necessity of the Revenue department being thoroughly overhauled under the direct supervision of an experienced and energetic officer. In a previous chapter I have referred to the proposed appointment of Moulvi Syed Ali Hasan for this work, but the proposal fell through owing to lack of support from the Vazir saheb and because of the Moulvi saheb demanding a salary which the State could not pay. A personal acquaintance with the details of administrative work, being, in my opinion, the first and foremost duty of a Ruler, I was determined from the day I assumed the reins of administration, to discharge in that spirit the responsibilities of my position. This did not accord with the traditional powers of the absolute Minister, and Moulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, who had wielded full powers for the last five years, did not welcome the new order

MOULVI ABDUL JABBAR KHAN, C.I E., THE STATE VAZIR.

of things. Disagreement was an inevitable consequence of this, but when I endeavoured to smooth the difference of opinion with patience and courtesy, my endeavours were set at naught by the Vazir saheb tendering his resignation in the following letter :—

" With due deference I beg to state that my old age does not permit of an active life and constant brain work, and in my advancing years only a retired life can suit me. I most respectfully pray that Your Highness may kindly and gladly relieve me of the cares of office, that I may spend the rest of my life in praying for the happiness and prosperity of Your Highness and your children. It is an ancient custom for the masters to free the infirm and the old."

It was my earnest wish that the Vazir saheb should withdraw his resignation, and I requested him to stay till the marriage celebration of my sons was over, hoping that he would thus have ample time to reconsider the matter. But his insistence on my acceptance of his resignation left me no alternative, and to his plea of old age I had at last to give way.

After Moulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan's departure I decided to carry on the work of administration personally for some time, and to introduce a very necessary alteration in ministerial powers. I knew that the work which I was undertaking was arduous, and that it would be no easy thing to cope with it effectively, but there was also the certainty of my acquiring useful experience and personal knowledge of the practical needs of the State. For a year and a half

I continued to work without the assistance of a Minister, and carefully and laboriously endeavoured to effect improvement in all departments. The Judicial department was in a slightly better condition than the others. The officers, it is true, were not all of them efficient and capable, nor were the laws and codes of procedure all that could be desired, but there was a system in the work of this department which lent itself to reform, and the laws and codes that were in force could be made the foundation of a suitable superstructure. The condition of the Police, however, was very unsatisfactory, and that a department on whose efficiency depended the security of the life and property of the people, should be in such a condition, was extremely deplorable. The Police stations established in the districts under my grandmother's orders, and maintained throughout the rule of my mother, had been abolished by Moulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan soon after his arrival. The detachment of Reserve Police to the establishment of which he lent his support, proved a highly inefficient body of men, and it was not surprising that a notable increase in crime had manifested itself. The Revenue department was in a state of hopeless chaos, and caused me great anxiety. There was no settlement worth the name, and no decent system of realisation of revenue. The *mustajirs* and farmers had been ruined, and their difficulties were steadily increasing. Successive famines had made matters worse, and the Tehsildars and other officials had evinced so little sympathy that whole villages were desolate, and their population had migrated elsewhere.

In view of these circumstances I made up my mind to divide the functions of the Vazir's office, and two new posts were created, that of the Moinul Moham, who was intended to be the head of the Revenue department, and that of the Nasirul Moham, who was to hold charge of the Judicial. In doing so I was guided by the desire to have two principal advisers instead of one, for I was convinced that a small council in which I could profit by the experience and expert knowledge of two responsible officers, each controlling his own particular department, was a better way of serving the ends I had in view. My next care was to obtain for these two appointments men of approved ability and integrity, who would command respect in the public eye. I wrote to my European friends on the subject, and took great pains to find suitable men. Colonel Barr, in reply to my letter, expressed confidence in the abilities of Moulvi Nizamuddin Hasan. In the meanwhile, the name of Moulvi Mumtaz Ali Khan was suggested to me, and I sought Mr. Bayley's advice about him. The latter, after corresponding with the Government of the United Provinces on the matter, informed me that Moulvi Mumtaz Ali Khan possessed an excellent knowledge of revenue work. As it was very necessary to fill the appointment without delay, I wrote to the Political Agent to arrange with the United Provinces Government for the loan of Moulvi Mumtaz Ali's services for a period of 2 years. The Moulvi saheb was at that time employed as Superintendent in the Balrampur *taluqa*, and as the period for which his services had been transferred to the *taluqa* was about to expire, I received

a favourable reply from the United Provinces Government, and Moulvi Mumtaz Ali took over charge of the office of Moinul Moham on the 1st of Ramazan 1320 A. H. from Munshi Qudrat Ali, who held temporary charge of the Revenue department. The appointment of the Nasirul Moham still remained to be settled. The work of this department was carried on by Khan Bahadur Enayat Husain, the Naib Vazir, but he was a very old man and found his duties too strenuous. Moulvi Nizamuddin Hasan arrived at Bhopal while I was out in the districts on tour. I sent Munshi Mansab Ali to bring him to Samarda where I saw him. I offered the post of Nasirul Moham to him, but he was willing to accept it only on the condition that it was considered senior to that of the Moinul Moham. To this I could not agree without doing violence to an important old usage, and I wrote and informed Mr. Bayley of my reasons. Moulvi Nizamuddin Hasan having declined the offer, I suggested the names of Khan Bahadur Moulvi Nasiruddin, Moulvi Sirajul Haq and Moulvi Syed Mohamad to Mr. Bayley, and requested him kindly to ascertain the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal about them. Major Impey soon forwarded to me a copy of the letter received in this connection by Mr. Bayley from Sir John Woodburn, the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, who recommended Moulvi Nasiruddin strongly because of the latter's reputation for quick disposal of all kinds of work. As this qualification was pre-eminently necessary in the highest judicial officer of the State, I lost no time in writing to the Government for the loan of Moulvi Nasiruddin's services for a period of two years. I must say a

MAJOR L. IMPEY, I.C.S.

word here in acknowledgment of the valuable assistance rendered me at this time both by Mr. Bayley and Major Impey whose sympathy smoothed many difficulties, and whose advice was extremely helpful.

CHAPTER VII

THE CORONATION DARBAR AT DELHI

THE rumours current in India for sometime about the celebration of the Coronation at Delhi, were confirmed by the publication of a *notification on the subject in the "Gazette of India" of the 7th March 1902. Shortly afterwards, I received a formal *kharita* from His Excellency the Viceroy enclosing a copy of the afore-mentioned notification, and inviting me to the Delhi Darbar.

The *kharita* was as follows:—

Dated, Calcutta, the 19th March 1902.

My Esteemed Friend,—I have the pleasure to inform Your Highness that it is my intention to hold an Imperial Darbar at Delhi on the 1st January

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*The notification was as follows:—

"Whereas by His Royal Proclamation bearing date the twenty-sixth day of June and the tenth day of December 1901, His Imperial Majesty King Edward VII, Emperor of India, has declared His Royal intention to celebrate the Solemnity of His Royal Coronation and that of his dearly beloved Consort the Queen upon the twenty-sixth day of June 1902, I now hereby publicly notify under this my hand and seal, as Viceroy and Governor-General of India, that it is my intention to hold at Delhi, on the first day of January 1903, an Imperial Darbar for the purpose of celebrating in His Majesty's Indian dominions this solemn and auspicious event.

"To this Darbar I propose to invite the Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, and Heads of administrations, from all parts of His Majesty's Indian dominions: the Princes, Chiefs, and Nobles of the Native States under His Majesty's protection, and representatives, both European and Natives, of all the Provinces of this great Empire.

"I also hereby notify that I shall forthwith issue such orders in Council as may be suitable to the occasion, and in conformity with the desire that will be felt by all classes of His Majesty's subjects to demonstrate their loyalty by appropriate public ceremonies and rejoicings.

"Dated Calcutta, this fourteenth day of February 1902.

(Signed) CURZON,

Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

1903, for the purpose of celebrating in a befitting manner the solemn event of the Coronation of His Imperial Majesty King Edward VII, Emperor of India, and of his dearly beloved Consort, the Queen.

In instructing me to hold this Darbar, His Majesty has desired it to be made known that he is anxious to afford to all the Princes and Chiefs of India, the opportunity of testifying their loyalty to his Throne and Person, and that attendance thereat will be regarded by His Majesty as equivalent to presence at his Coronation in England.

I enclose for Your Highness' information, a copy of the announcement which I have caused to be published in the "Gazette of India," and I request the honour of Your Highness' presence on that auspicious occasion.

Due notice will be given through the usual channel of the particular date at which Your Highness will be expected at Delhi.

I remain with much consideration,
Your Highness' sincere Friend,
(Signed) CURZON,
Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

I sent a *kharita* in reply accepting His Excellency's invitation, and soon ordered the necessary arrangements being taken in hand. A plan of Bhopal camp was prepared and submitted to me, and after I had signified my approval, Mr. Cook, the State Engineer, was deputed to Delhi to carry out the arrangements. The Darbar *shamiana*, tents and furniture were sent by rail. The Victoria

Lancers, the Ehteshamia Cavalry, the battalion of State Infantry, the Band and the elephants proceeded by road, and did the journey stage by stage. When the camp had been pitched, I sent Munshi Enayatullah, Imam Khan, the Treasurer of Obaidulla Khan's *deorhi*, Munshi Mansab Ali and Moulvi Qudrat Ali, to supervise the work of decoration. On the return of this party, Munshi Israr Hasan Khan was deputed to superintend the completion of arrangements which he did most satisfactorily during his long stay in camp.

The 24th December was fixed for my departure. Of the retinue of 576 people who were to be in residence with me in camp, 436 had preceded me, and a party of 140 accompanied me in my special train. The direct management of affairs in the city during my absence was entrusted to K. B. Enayat Husain, the officiating Nasirul Moham, while the Kamdar of the *deorhi* remained in charge of the palaces. I authorised M. Qudrat Ali to supervise the routine work of my office, and left for his guidance detailed instructions, a copy of which is given below: "We shall, God willing, leave for Delhi on Tuesday, the 22nd of Ramazan 1320 A. H., to take part in the ceremonies of the Delhi Darbar, and the Moinul Moham will accompany us. You are authorized to deal under your signature with routine papers demanding urgent attention. Papers which are not urgent, should be kept pending, but matters of importance should be decided by you immediately after consultation with Shaikh Mohammad Hasan and Dewan Thakur Pershad. Appointments and dismissals of State employees should be referred

to us, although you are authorized to make provisional arrangements subject to our approval. The *dak* from Delhi should be opened by you personally, and the necessary orders promptly issued and carried out.

Dated the 16th Ramazan 1320."

My train left Bhopal at 10-20 A.M., on December 24th, and reached Delhi the following morning at eight o'clock. I was accompanied by my sons, Rao Bahadur Thakur Satru Sal, Munshi Mumtaz Ali Khan, Hafiz Mohammad Hasan, Munshi Ahmad Husain Khan, Munshi Enayat Husain, Hakim Nurul Hasan, Dr. Wali Mohammad, Munshi Mansab Ali, Munshi Sakhawat Husain, Munshi Altaf Husain, Mian Raoof Mohammad Khan, Mian Anwar Mohammad Khan, Munshi Majid Husain, Imam Khan and Seth Narayan Dass. *Pardah* arrangements had been made on the station platform, and Major Younghusband was present with a guard of honour to accord me a cordial reception. The usual salute was fired on my arrival, and I was escorted by a detachment of Indian Cavalry to Bhopal camp which was only a few minutes' drive from the station. The Bhopal camp was situated about 4 miles from the city of Delhi and was surrounded on all sides by the camps of other Rulers of Central India. K. B. Munshi Israr Hasan Khan had made excellent arrangements for the supply of provisions, and no one of my retinue suffered the slightest inconvenience. The camp was guarded by my own troops.

On the day of the Viceroy's arrival all the Princes and Chiefs present in Delhi assembled at the station to welcome His Excellency. I intended

donning a *burqa* on this occasion, for I seldom used a veil till then, and usually conversed with Political officers and other gentlemen from behind a screen. But fearing lest I should suffer inconvenience at the station, the officers of Government had kindly arranged a screened dais for my use on the station platform. On alighting from my carriage I was conveyed to the dais in a palanquin, and my sons stayed near me all the time. The Band struck up the National Anthem on the arrival of the Viceroy's special train, and the batteries fired a royal salute. His Excellency was, on arrival, greeted by Ruling Princes and Chiefs, and spent about a quarter of an hour with them. Soon afterwards the special train of Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Connaught came in. Their Royal Highnesses as well as Their Excellencies came near my dais and shook hands with me. Mr. Bayley and other friends of mine also came and conversed with me for some time. Major Impey introduced me to a Japanese lady, but we being strangers to each other's language, all attempts at conversation were fruitless. Difference of tongues is indeed embarrassing at times. The Viceregal procession then started from the railway station, but I had been excused from taking part in it owing to *parda* difficulties. Two elephants of the State, however, ridden by Khan Bahadur Mumtaz Ali Khan and other officials of the State, represented Bhopal in the procession. On the 30th December, the Viceroy performed the opening ceremony of the great Exhibition which, in the variety of its exhibits, was the first of its kind in India. My sons took part in the ceremony on my behalf, while

the other admission cards which had been received from Government were given to the Moinul Moham, Munshi Irsar Hasan Khan, Rao Bahadur Satru Sal, Munshi Ahmad Hasan Khan, Munshi Enayat Husain Khan and the other prominent Sardars and officials who accompanied the Sahebzadas.

The Darbar was held on the 1st January 1903. An early hour of the morning had at first been notified for the Darbar, but since the day happened to coincide with the *Idulfitr*, the great religious festival of the Mussalmans, who congregate for prayers on the morning of the *Id*, the Viceroy had altered the time of the Darbar out of regard for the convenience of Mussalmans. Indeed, it was a unique coincidence that the *Idulfitr* fell on the same day as the Coronation, for the *Id*, too, is celebrated by Mussalmans with manifestations of great joy and happiness. *Id* prayers were offered in Bhopal camp in the morning, but for women it being purely optional to attend these prayers, I did not join the congregation, and said my prayers in my own tent. As a result of the correspondence which my mother had with the Government of India in connection with the Darbar at Bombay, correspondence to which detailed reference has been made in the pages of *Tuzk-e-Sultani*, the Government of India had written to me that in case I did not like to sit with the other Ruling Princes at the Darbar, special arrangements could be made to suit my convenience in the screened portion of the amphitheatre allotted to *parda* ladies. Whilst thanking the Government in reply, I informed them that I would have no objection to taking my seat in the amphitheatre with

the other Princes, inasmuch as my religion permitted me to appear in a *burqa.*

Starting at the appointed time, my carriage passed by the United Provinces, Central India, Baroda and Mysore camps, and the village of Azadpur, and I arrived at the amphitheatre in about fifty minutes. Nasrulla Khan, Obaidulla Khan, the Moinul Moham, Bakhshi Mohammad Hasan, Rao Satru Sal, Munshi Israr Hasan Khan, the Mir Munshi and the State Vakil accompanied me to the Darbar. Sahibzada Hamidulla Khan being only 8 years of age, I did not take him with me. On my entering the amphitheatre the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, and the Viceroy's Military Secretary received me, and conducted me to my seat which was on the left of the Viceroy next to that of the Maharaja of Orchha. The seats at the Darbar were so arranged that the higher the rank of the ruler, the farther his chair was from the Viceroy. Thus Orchha was nearer to the Viceroy's dais than myself, and next to my seat on the other side was that of the Maharaja Scindhia. On a dais in the centre canopied by a beautiful dome, were the chairs of the Viceroy and the Duke of Connaught, facing the assembled Bands. The Union Jack, that magnificent emblem of a magnificent Empire, waved in the centre of the amphitheatre. All Indian and European guests having assembled, the Duke of Connaught wearing a Field Marshal's uniform, arrived accompanied by the Duchess, and the whole assembly stood up as soon as Their Royal Highnesses alighted from their carriage. A few minutes later Lord and Lady Curzon, escorted by the Viceroy's Bodyguard and

LORD CURZON.

the Cadet Corps, entered the amphitheatre and received a most cordial welcome. After their Excellencies were seated, the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India rose, and sought His Excellency's permission to open the Darbar. Major Maxwell, then, in loud and clear accents, read the message of the Emperor, which was followed by a Royal salute of 101 guns being fired by a battery near by, and the assembled Bands striking up the National Anthem. After the salute Lord Curzon addressed the assembly with eloquence for which he is justly famous. At the conclusion of the Viceroy's speech the Ruling princes were, in the order of their precedence, presented to His Excellency. The Nizam of Hyderabad and the Gaekwar of Baroda were the first to offer congratulations and testify to their devotion to the British Crown. I, too, rose and proceeded towards the dais, accompanied by my sons Nasrulla Khan and Obaidulla Khan. For this occasion I had prepared an address for presentation to the King-Emperor. The casket containing this address was held by Obaidulla Khan, and I took it from him on reaching the dais. When His Excellency advanced to shake hands with me, I turned round to give the casket to the Foreign Secretary, but he was at some distance bringing in the Prince who was to be presented to His Excellency after me. I placed the casket immediately on the dais and shook hands with the Viceroy. His Excellency asked me as to what the casket contained. "It contains an address" I answered "in which I have congratulated His Majesty on behalf of all Mussalmans of India, and have endeavoured to give

expression to the emotions stirred by the auspicious event of to-day." "I shall be grateful," I added "if my humble address is forwarded to His Majesty."

The address was as follows:—

"Praise be to the Almighty who has entrusted India to the care of a Government which rules the country with justice and wisdom. It is a circumstance of the happiest augury for the Mussalmans that the Coronation of the Emperor should have coincided with the happy festival of the *Id*. To-day in this Darbar are assembled Princes and Chiefs of ancient lineage, whose ancestors have played an important part in the past history of the land. They have all gathered to demonstrate their devotion and attachment to the British Crown, and amongst them is the Ruler of Bhópal, whose forbears have also, in the past, given striking proofs of their loyalty to the Paramount Power, and the entire resources of whose State are always, in times of emergency, at the disposal of the British Government. As a true admirer of British rule I consider it my duty, on this memorable occasion, to assure the Government not only of the loyalty of myself, my sons and my people, but of the whole Mussalman community who are enjoined by their faith to be loyal to their Sovereign. I pray to the Almighty to shower his choicest blessings on the British dominions, to strengthen the power of the British Crown and to add thousands of precious jewels to the diadem of the Emperor whose Coronation we celebrate to-day. That the King-Emperor's rule be happy and prosperous, even more than that of the late Queen Empress of revered memory, is my earnest prayer."

All the time I was speaking to His Excellency the Viceroy held my hand in his own, and at the end of the conversation, Obaidulla Khan took the casket and handed it over to His Excellency's Secretary. The Duke of Connaught then shook hands with me, and as I approached the end of the dais, Lady Curzon and the Duchess accorded me a most gracious greeting. After all the Princes had been presented to the Viceroy, the Darbar came to an end.

On the 2nd January a garden party was held, and after sunset there was a splendid display of fireworks, specially prepared for the occasion by a well-known firm of England. This display consisted of 81 varieties, and was a magnificent rendering of the pyrotechnic art. It being an extremely cold evening, I did not go myself, but my sons, who saw the fireworks from the Juma Mosque, described their impressions to me. On the morning of January 3rd the great Military review was held, and in the evening Chapters of the Orders of the Star of India and the Indian Empire were held in the Dewan-i-Am of the historic Fort. Not being a member of either of these orders at that time, it was not necessary for me to attend the Chapters. My youngest son Hamidulla Khan, however, attended the Chapters as a page of the Viceroy, another page being a son of His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir.

On the 7th January the troops and retainers of the Indian Princes were reviewed by the Viceroy and the Duke of Connaught. A large number of European ladies and gentlemen were also present. My step-nephews Mian Afzal Mohamed Khan and Mian Raoof Mohamad Khan took part in the pro-

cession wearing the steel armour of olden times, and both of them being tall and well built, the ancient costume suited them admirably. The Imperial Service Troops of my State marched past the amphitheatre under the command of Major Karim Beg, while the other troops of the State were led by *Bakhshi* Mohamed Hasan Khan, Nasrat Jung. On the 8th January the great Military review was held under the command of His Excellency Lord Kitchener, the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's forces in India. Owing to indisposition, I was not present on that occasion, and my seat was occupied by Sahibzada Hamidulla Khan who was accompanied by Major Impey, the Political Agent. The forces of Bhopal State marched past under the command of Nawab Nasrulla Khan and SahibzadaObaidulla Khan. The total number of troops reviewed on this occasion exceeded twenty thousand. On the 9th January, the Princes and Chiefs were invited to a State banquet at Viceregal Lodge. After the banquet His Highness the Nizam was invested with the badge and insignia of G. C. B. The following day both the Viceroy and the Duke left Delhi, and the festivities of the famous Darbar came to an end. I left Delhi by special train on the 13th Shawwal and arrived at Bhopal the next day. My arrival was public, and Faridulla Khan, the *Naib Bakhshi*, and the other prominent officials and citizens of the town met me at the station, and extended a most cordial welcome to me.

The 24th June had originally been fixed for His Majesty's Coronation in England, and orders had been issued for the event being celebrated

on the same day in Bhopal. The sudden intimation of the Emperor's illness, however, upset all arrangements, and the programme had to be abandoned. On the following day the Mussalman inhabitants of the city assembled in the Juma Masjid to pray for His Majesty's recovery. By the grace of God the King-Emperor was soon restored to health, and the 9th August was fixed for the celebration of the happy event. On that date a salute of 101 guns was fired from the Fatehgarh fort, and eleven prisoners, two of whom were life-convicts, were released from the central jail. I reviewed my troops in the morning, and the Victoria Lancers, the Ehteshamia squadron and the State Infantry marched past the saluting base in excellent style. My sons and all nobles and officials of the State were present to witness the Review. All classes of people shared the joys of this celebration, and arrears of revenue amounting to about six lakhs of rupees were remitted.

On the 1st January according to the instructions which I left before departing for Delhi, the nobles and State officials assembled in a Darbar *shamiana* in front of the Sadar Manzil, and the proclamation of His Majesty the King-Emperor was read, all present standing up as a mark of respect. A royal salute was then fired from the Fatehgarh fort, and was followed by Munshi Syed Qudrat Ali delivering a speech in which he dwelt upon the blessing of the British rule and the cordiality of the relationship between the Bhopal State and the British Crown. The Band and troops also attended the ceremony, and five prisoners, one of whom was a life-convict, were released from jail.

CHAPTER VIII

WORK IN THE DISTRICTS

SOON after my return from the Delhi Darbar, I set out on a tour of the Southern and Eastern districts. Heads of the departments concerned accompanied me, so that matters demanding immediate attention might be promptly settled on the spot. There being no metalled roads in these districts at that time, orders were given for all such as existed and were used by country carts, being put in a proper state of repair. The arrangements for the supply of labour and provisions in connection with such tours, often entail considerable hardship to the people. My predecessors, whenever they undertook a tour in the *mofussil*, were accompanied by a number of *baniás* (shopkeepers) who were supposed to be responsible for the supply of all provisions, and yet the Tehsildars took it upon themselves to supply a number of things required by the officials or the troops. This stepping in of the official agency for the supply of provisions or labour, could not but result in a certain amount of oppression, and occasionally the coinciding of these tours with the sowing time of the *rabi* crops, caused no small inconvenience and consequent loss to the tillers of the soil. Having learnt from personal experience in the course of the tours on which I accompanied my mother, that hard-hearted servants of the State sometimes treated the ryots with little sympathy, I

caused the following notice to be published broadcast in the districts which I intended to visit.

"I shall, please God, be starting on the 25th Shawwal on an extensive tour of the Southern and Eastern districts, and a number of officials and their subordinates will form part of my retinue. Everybody is hereby most strictly warned that any instance of an article being obtained without its being paid for in cash, will be visited with condign punishment. *Chaukidars*, *chaprasis* and menial servants are not to be given any gratuities by the Nazims, Tahsildars, Thanedars, *mustajirs* or farmers, nor should presentations of grain or of articles of value be made to anybody connected with my camp. Stringent orders must be issued to soldiers and camp followers not to do anything calculated to injure the crops growing in the country through which they will pass. Any contravention of these orders will be taken notice of by me personally, and the culprit, in addition to being summarily dismissed, will be debarred from getting any future employment in the State."

Arrangements were made for all officials, soldiers and camp followers to make the necessary purchases from the *banias* of my camp who bought provisions from the *mustajirs* and farmers. I further gave orders that the price of all articles bought from the *mustajirs* and farmers should be paid in the presence of the Nazim of the district concerned, and of another official whose name was published.

In consultation with Khan Bahadur Mumtaz Ali Khan and Munshi Israr Hasan Khan, I paid careful attention during this tour to the work of

settlement, and the allied question of the collection of revenue arrears. I deputed Nawab Nasrulla Khan to visit the various tahsils and thanas personally, and submit his report to me at an early date. The cold weather was coming to an end, and as I intended to finish my tour before the onset of the hot weather, I had to work very hard every day. I have always been an early riser, so at 7 in the morning, having concluded my prayers, I was ready for the daily work. Till 11, I interviewed almost everybody who came to see me. There were no restrictions, the subordinates of the tahsil or the thana, the civil officials of the districts, the *mustajirs* and *muafidars* would all come, and a rambling conservation with them on all sorts of things afforded me an insight into the general condition of affairs. The Moinul Moham would also come in with papers of his department, and I would talk to him about the rates on which the leases were to be framed. I retired for my siesta at 11, returning to my work punctually at 2 after prayers. At this time Diwan Thakur Pershad, an old official of the State whose experience of the work of settlement dated from the early years of my mother's rule, brought the *pattas*, and in my presence, distributed them to the *mustajirs*. This work lasted till about six in the evening when Shaikh Mohamad Hasan and Munshi Israr Hasan Khan attended with papers connected with the outstanding arrears of revenue. To the general confusion that obtained in the papers of the Revenue department, I have referred in previous chapters. I therefore gave orders for registers being carefully compiled, after a summary enquiry, of all arrears in

regard to which the *mustajirs* concerned admitted their liability. That this enquiry should be conducted under my supervision, was very necessary, and these registers occupied my attention till eight in the evening. After that hour I disposed of the papers and applications which reached me from the capital. A new calamity had fallen upon the country, and the grim spectre of bubonic plague had arisen in Bombay, and extended its ravages for the first time to Central India.

During my tours I have always made a point of allowing the womenfolk to come and see me. The wives of *mustajirs* and farmers are very agreeable persons to talk to, and I have found conversation with them not only interesting, but also highly instructive. They always meet me in a crowd outside their village, with their little ones in their arms, and brass bowls full of water, as a time honoured token of good wishes to their ruler. They chant a song of welcome as soon as they see my carriage, the chanting increasing in speed and volume as I come nearer. On meeting them my *chobdar* drops a few coins into the bowls of water which they hold up aloft. It is an interesting sight which they present, these wives and daughters of the peasantry, and the warmth of their greeting is extremely touching. The main object of my tour being to acquaint myself with the real condition of my people, I have long conversations with these simple-minded women, and I have noticed that sincere sympathy speedily evokes a cordial response, and quickens their sense of attachment to me. It is a real pleasure to me to see them so cheerful, and

often, after a hard day's work, I seek relaxation in a free conversation with them when they would unburden their minds to me, and describe happenings of everyday life which throw instructive sidelights on the work of administration.

From Deori I went to Raisen, and here Obaidulla Khan came to see me from Bhopal and went back after a few hours' stay. Hamidulla Khan also accompanied his elder brother for a couple of days. I had never hitherto been separated from both the boys at a time. Nasrulla and Obaidulla had, sometimes, accompanied their father to his shooting box at Samarda for a week, but Hamidulla had always stayed with me. No particular work in connection with my tour had been entrusted to Obaidulla Khan who frequently came up from Bhopal to see me. Hamidulla is greatly attached to his elder brother who was sixteen years old when the former was born. and Obaidulla has always been a devoted brother since the baby appeared. They spent a night at Bhopal, and starting on their return journey together, arrived at Salamatpur at 4 in the morning. Here a carriage met them, and accompanied by Munshi Ahmad Hasan, the Mir Munshi, and Aqil Khan, an old servant of mine, they started for Raisen. On the slope of the bridge on the Betwa river, the horses shied at something, and the coachman having lost control of them in the darkness, the carriage suddenly fell down into the river bed about 15 feet below. The coachman and the horses were killed on the spot, and the syces received serious injuries. As soon as the carriage rolled

to its side, Obaidulla Khan shouted "Hamid, Hamid," but receiving no reply and feeling alarmed, he broke open a shutter and emerging into the open air, called vehemently for his brother. It was a dark night, and the weather being extremely cold, the brothers were travelling in a closed carriage. Hamidulla, stunned by the fall, took some time to realise what had happened, and as soon as he answered his brother's impatient calls, Obaidulla ran towards the voice. The latter's first care was to see if his brother was hurt, and great was his happiness when he found that Hamid had escaped uninjured. Obaidulla, however, received a wound in his head, an inch and a half long and about a quarter of an inch deep, but his anxiety for Hamid's safety had overborne all consideration for his own needs, and it was only after he had found his brother that he began to feel the pain of his wound which was bleeding profusely. Seeing the condition of his brother Hamidulla began to cry, and this increased the difficulty of Obaidulla Khan, who had to soothe his brother and also to look after himself. Both Enayat Husain Khan and Aqil also received injuries. A sowar hurried to my camp to fetch a doctor and a conveyance. Nasrulla Khan, who was sleeping, was awakened and apprised of what had taken place. He immediately arranged for the doctor, and himself set out to the scene of the accident, but before he reached the spot, his brothers had been picked up by a passing bullock cart, and met the Nawab sahib on the road. Nasrulla Khan rushed back to inform me of what had happened, and soon afterwards his younger brothers also

came in and described everything to me in detail. Although I was sorry to see that Obaidulla had received a severe wound, I yet thanked the Almighty that it was not worse. Dr. Wali Mahomed washed the wound, and having dressed it, wired to Dr. Joshi, the State Surgeon, to come up immediately. Obaidulla was suffering acute pain, which had greatly increased owing to the wound having been exposed to the cold air of a winter morning. A sleeping draught had to be given occasionally, and both the doctors were in constant attendance. They suggested a change to Bhopal, as it was very cold in camp, so the next day I started for Bhopal with Obaidulla Khan.

Before leaving Raisen I gave instructions to Nawab Nasrulla Khan and the Moinul Moham to continue my work. I stopped at Bhopal for four days, and as soon as Obaidulla's wound began to yield to treatment, I returned. Working day and night, I had finished the greater part of my work. Plague, unfortunately, was on the increase at Bhopal, and the people were alarmed. The weather was warming up, and I had to look to the convenience of my party and followers. I decided to break up the camp at Raisen, and spend a month at Samarda. Nasrulla Khan took up his residence in his *jagir* at Dewanganj some three miles away, and the Moinul Moham was deputed to supervise the measures taken in Bhopal to prevent the spread of the terrible visitation. Obaidulla Khan, too, was brought to Samarda, and his wound, by God's grace, healed rapidly. The change to Samarda did my health a great deal of good, and I was able to finish

the work of the remaining four *mahals*. I returned to Bhopal on the 7th Safar, Nawab Nasrulla Khan accompanying me. The Moinul Moham and Khan Bahadur Enayat Husain were instructed to visit the remaining tahsils, and submit detailed reports to me. I told them that it was my earnest desire that the rules framed by me in regard to the purchase of supplies for camps, should be strictly followed.

My tour brought home to me the great necessity of personal acquaintance with the condition of things in the *mofussil* generally. It was imperative that I should be in close touch with the work of administration in the districts. During this tour 4,699 applications were put up to me and 102 to the Moinul Moham and the Nasirul Moham; most of these were disposed of on the spot. I felt amply rewarded for my pains on finding that my people greatly appreciated my solicitude for their well being, and were benefitted by my humble endeavours.

CHAPTER IX

THE FIRST TWO YEARS

It is impossible for me, in this book, to deal with all the details of administration which occupied my attention at this time. I will only mention matters of importance, a brief reference to which may not be without interest to the reader. Of all the difficulties under which I carried on the work of administration in the first two years of my rule, the worst was the lack of a competent counsellor. I had, therefore, to give my time to matters of detail which could easily have been attended to by somebody else, had I been more fortunate. Nothing daunted, however, I placed implicit confidence in the help of the Almighty, and believing, as I did, in the Divine words "Verily, God's help is sufficient unto him who resigns himself to His will," I applied myself to my responsible work with a will to persevere. It was a good thing, however, that I was accustomed to hard work, for even in the unhappy years of estrangement with my mother, when, as Heir Apparent, I had to look after the affairs of my *jagir*, I took a serious view of my responsibilities and apart from the time spent in studying useful books and supervising the education of my children, I devoted a number of hours every day to the carrying out of my administrative duties. Too much of work, it is true, is just as bad for one's health as too little of it, but morally speaking, it is better to err in this

matter on the side of excess than on that of indolence. My work, as a matter of fact, afforded me a sort of relaxation from the worries I had to suffer for twenty seven long years, and but for it, and the presence of a real friend and sharer of my sorrows, the weight of my anxieties and troubles would have crushed me.

I have already referred to the important events of the early years of my rule. I will now mention as briefly as possible the administrative measures which I felt it necessary to adopt on assuming the reins of government. As soon as the appointment of the Moinul Moham was made, I consulted him as to the period of the next settlement, and after a careful scrutiny of the papers, he expressed entire agreement with my view that the next settlement should be one of short duration, and the opportunity should be taken of carrying out a systematic survey, and preparing land records for a settlement of longer period when the time was ripe for it. Acting upon this advice, I gave orders for a settlement being made for five years, and the concessions that were to be granted to the agriculturists were published broadcast. This was productive of good results, and stimulated the demand for the *mustajiri* of villages. The Revenue department was able to carry out the settlement of two districts in the very first year, and remissions of about two lakhs of revenue were granted. Major Impey, who always took a great interest in revenue work, assisted me with very useful suggestions at this time, and I was very fortunate indeed to have him in charge of the Bhopal Agency at a time when his

balanced judgment and independent advice were most needed by the State.

The agricultural classes were experiencing great difficulties in connection with their supplies of seed grain and manure. The *mahajans* did not lend money owing to the insolvent condition of the cultivators generally, and because of the relief afforded by the courts of justice being far from satisfactory. The corruption of the subordinate officials, on the other hand, was a hindrance to the necessary advances being made by the State. The only solution of the difficulty seemed to me to be an ordinance limiting the rate of interest which the *mahajans* could charge, and granting the concession of suits arising out of these transactions being filed without the payment of court fees. I instituted a number of scholarships which were tenable at the Agricultural school at Cawnpore, for I realised the importance of having an effecient staff even in the subordinate grades of the Revenue department. To the provision of a suitable *personnel* in all ranks of this department I gave much time and thought; salaries of certain grades had to be raised, and the posts of Naib Tahsildars were created. A number of stipend-holders were appointed to these posts, and thus afforded an opportunity of making themselves useful to the State. The system of having a separate administration of reserved forests was discontinued, and the whole forest area was placed under one head of the department who was given an assistant to act in a subordinate capacity. Certain privileges were granted to agricultural classes in the matter of timber used for construction of houses.

A complete Forest Manual had been framed during the ministry of Colonel Ward, but its rules and regulations had remained a dead letter owing to the weakness of administration and the corruption of subordinate staff. It was plain that any improvement in the existing state of things was impossible unless the provisions of the Forest Manual were enforced. Stringent orders were, therefore, issued for a strict observance of the rules of the Manual, and the fact of drastic action having been threatened in the event of default, soon produced the effect desired. The organisation of the Postal department was overhauled; a sufficient supply of new stamps of all denominations was obtained and new facilities provided for the convenience of the people.

The condition of the *mansabdars* (stipend-holders) claimed my earnest attention. I found that the department did not at all supply the want which had led to its establishment. The stipends were intended to be of some use, but they rather made worthless and indolent men of people who might, without them, have done real good service to the State, if they had bestirred themselves for the purpose The majority of grants were held by men who passed their time in indolence, and whose extravagant habits had led them into heavy debts. To gentry brought up in this atmosphere, gossip and idleness were the chief pleasures of life, and although I would have been perfectly justified in cutting the whole department out of the budget in the interests of State finances which were then in a parlous plight, I did not do so simply because I was afraid that they would be faced by utter misery

and starvation, if any drastic step was taken. I, therefore, decided to endeavour to make useful men of them, and to that end I made it compulsory for them to attend certain offices regularly.

I knew that the people of Bhopal were very backward in education, but my disappointment was great when I saw the condition of the schools in the capital and the districts generally. Everybody seemed to be dead against the modern system, and those who were enlightened enough to appreciate the advantages of education at all, confined themselves to their children being taught the Quran and a little Arabic and Persian. Even if education in these limits had been on the right lines, there would have been little to complain of. The Punjab University had prescribed an excellent curriculum for their Oriental section, and so had the famous religious school of Deoband, but so tyrannic is the hold of old ways of thought, that the slightest improvement in anything connected with the management, the modes of teaching, or the curricula of schools appeared to be a most undesirable thing to the people generally. Her late Highness had sanctioned a large number of scholarships with a view to popularise education. Following in my mother's footsteps, I too granted many facilities and concessions in pursuit of the same object, and used every endeavour to make education more popular both in the city and the *mofussil*. In Sehore, too, where the Mohammedan community is fairly strong in numbers, I established a school for the religious instruction of children, as the needs of English education were adequately supplied by the English High school

which was in a highly efficient condition under the supervision of Bhopal Agency.

Underweighing is a sin against which man has been warned both in the Old Testament and the Holy Quran. The offence was much too common and faulty weights were ordinarily used. I took steps for true and proper weights, cast under State auspices, being supplied to all bazaars in the city and the districts.

The state of things in the Judicial department too, called for improvement. There being no recognised standard for vakils and pleaders, the privilege of practising in the courts had in the past been frequently granted on grounds of patronage rather than of merit. Orders were issued to the effect that no individual would in future be allowed to practise unless he had passed the test of a suitable examination. This soon led to the profession getting rid of the undesirables and the right stamp of men stepping in.

The reforms introduced in the Police department at this time have been indicated in a previous chapter. Circumstances compelled me to re-establish in the districts the Police stations which had been abolished by the late Vazir. The department was particularly instructed to display greater energy in the detection of crime, and it was a matter of supreme satisfaction to me that the returns of the second year showed a considerable decrease in crime as a consequence of the vigilance of the department.

The salary of the Roman Catholic priest in Bhopal was at first paid by Hakim Shahzad Masih of the Bourbon family, and after the latter's death, by

his widow, the Dulhan saheba. Later on Enayat Masih, the adopted son of Hakim Shahzad Masih, succeeded to the latter's estates, and made himself responsible for all expenses connected with the church. On Enayat Masih's death an allowance of Rs. 4,000 per annum was sanctioned for his son Imdad Masih whose mismanagement assumed a grave aspect and, made it absolutely necessary that the *jagir* should revert to the State. Out of consideration for the religious needs of my Christian subjects, however, I made the salary of their padre a permanent charge on the State budget, and thus put the matter on a stable basis.

To the condition of the State treasury as I found it on my succession to the *masnad*, a brief reference has already been made. My personal interest in administration, however, soon altered the state of things, and an increase of Rs. 2,72,915-6-9 in the receipts of the first year, and of Rs. 6,07,586-7-9 in those of the second year, were matters of no small gratification to me. The year's total expenditure at the time of my accession amounted to Rs. 32,85,015-14-9, and the figures for the second year showed a decrease, under this head, of nearly eight and a half lakhs of rupees.

Towards the end of the year 1320 A. H. plague appeared in Bhopal. Reports at first reached us of this dread scourge having broken out at Indore, Rutlam and Hoshangabad, but it was not long before our worst fears were confirmed, and intimation was received from the Political Agent of suspicious cases having occurred at Ichhawar within the limits of State territory. Dr. Joshi, the State Sur-

geon, who was deputed to visit the district, reported that the cases were all of pneumonia, but plague being prevalent in the adjoining States, I was convinced that the high percentage of mortality was due to the disease being a particularly severe form of plague. No time was to be lost, and I issued orders for quarantines being established speedily, and a set of rules and regulations was framed for the guidance of State officials in carrying out precautionary measures. I soon discovered that these measures were viewed with considerable uneasiness generally, and it being very necessary to avoid anything savouring of harshness at such a time, I caused the following order to be issued to the Nasirul Moham :—

"Numerous petitions and memorials have reached me to the effect that the precautionary measures adopted to safeguard against the spread of plague, have created a sense of unrest and panic among the people of Bhopal, and complaint is made of the severity of the steps which have been taken. By God's grace no plague cases have hitherto occurred in the capital, and the outlying districts where this scourge has made its appearance, will, I trust, soon get rid of it. You are hereby instructed to assure the people that no measure will be taken by your department in violation of the religious sanctions and old customs of any community, for, in common with the British Government whose protection we all enjoy, I consider it above all things important that the religious feelings and traditional usages of all my subjects should be given due weight and consideration. The measures you are supervising

should not be unduly severe, and should be on the lines of those taken in connection with other contagious and infectious diseases, such as small-pox and cholera. The quarantines which have already been established must be continued, for they have justified their existence, but the regulations need to be enforced tactfully and with adequate regard for the people's susceptibilities."

A copy of this order was sent for the information and guidance of Dr. Joshi, the State Surgeon, and he was instructed that if plague appeared in the city, he was to report to me immediately, and the precautionary measures indicated were not to be exceeded under any circumstances without the agreement of the Unani physicians and my special sanction. The population of Bhopal were warned that in the light of experience elsewhere, dampness of houses and uncleanliness had proved a contributory cause of the scourge spreading rapidly, and that sanitary measures were the best preventive.

In February 1903, plague appeared in the city itself, and the people were soon in an indescribable state of panic. I was out in the districts on my first tour, and though all possible steps were taken to prevent the spread of the scourge, they seemed to be of no avail. Under the stress of anxiety people were behaving like children who, in their sickness, loathe the very sight of medicine. Establishment of quarantines, segregation of patients, evacuation of infected localities—every single measure, in short, was thoroughly detested by the people, and hundreds of applications were reaching me containing all sorts of absurd allegations concerning everybody. I used

every endeavour to soothe the anxiety of the people, and their petitions were answered in words calculated to allay their excitement. I deputed the Moinul Moham who had had experience of plague in the Balrampur *taluqa*, to help Obaidulla Khan in fighting the scourge, and both verbally and in writing asked him to pay adequate regard to the habits and customs of the people. On arrival at Bhopal, the Moinul Moham did everything that was possible, and submitted daily reports to me, reports which were anxiously awaited and thoroughly scrutinised by me. Obaidulla Khan, at my instance, convened a public meeting which Major Impey, ever a genuine friend of the State, also attended. At the meeting the policy of the State and the proposals which it was intended to carry out in pursuit of that policy, were explained to the people in the presence of the Unani physicians and prominent citizens.

I saw Colonel Weir, the Agency Surgeon, at Deori, and thoroughly discussed the plague measures with him. He was strongly in favour of inoculation, but the Mulkowal disaster in the Punjab had frightened the people,and I had little hope that with that regrettable episode so fresh in their memory, the people generally would be willing to submit to inoculation. They were in a state of utter panic. Scaring reports of the ravages of plague in Bombay and elsewhere had made them extremely nervous, and when the visitation appeared at their own doorstep, their judgment departed, and their sense of danger carried them completely off their feet. I told Colonel Weir that the people were in no mood to listen to good advice, and unless they were coaxed into a proper

frame of mind, they would never come forward to get themselves inoculated. Colonel Weir entirely agreed with me that the time was not opportune for inoculation to be seriously considered. The best course was to persuade the people to evacuate the infected localities, and I wrote to the Moinul Moham as follows:—

"I should like you to assure all classes of people in my name that the plague regulations have been framed in the interests of the people themselves, and that I have, all along, been animated by the desire to respect popular wishes. I have given orders that the State Police should be responsible for the watch and ward of all houses evacuated by the people, and that the transport needed by plague patients and their relatives be provided at State expense. The Farhat Afza garden and the buildings of the *Deorhi Khas*, the Bara Mahal, Nawab Manzil, Gulshan Aalam, and the Parween Manzil should be vacated immediately, and placed at the disposal of the people. I have every confidence that in the matter of accommodation provided by the State, due regard will be paid to the rank and status of those who are forced by circumstances to take advantage of this offer."

Medical attendance, both English and Unani, was provided. I had a list prepared of the leading citizens of the various quarters of the city whose assistance was sought, and I must say, wholeheartedly given. In the various notifications in which I addressed the people at this time, I invariably begged them to beseech the Almighty to remove the calamity which had befallen us. Although I was out in the districts

on tour, my heart was with the people in the capital who were in great distress. On the Moinul Moham's suggestion, a sum of Rs. 25,000. was placed at the disposal of municipal authorities, and nothing, humanly possible, was left undone. My regiment of Imperial Service Troops was moved to Islamnagar—a place some six miles from Bhopal, and the Revenue department was made responsible for the supply of fodder and other requirements. Arrangement was made for a new burying ground for those who died of plague. The spiritual needs too were not forgotten, and sacrifices and prayers were offered in all mosques of the city. On the importance of prayers almost all religions have laid great stress. "He," says the Quran, "answers the prayers made in distress, and with His infinite mercy lifts the load of grief." Many holy verses of the Quran pay an admirable tribute to His Might and Power, but there are also words in which man is taught to beg in his distress for His mercy and compassion. There are some magnificent prayers in the Quran, and also in the Prophet's traditions. I had extracts from these published, and distributed broadcast amongst the people to enable them to recite the prayers frequently.

At this time a severe outbreak of plague occurred at Hoshangabad in adjoining British territory, and the epidemic spread to the southern district of the State. Several *mustajis* who came to my camp to get their leases, developed suspicious symptoms and died. I persuaded all people who were likely to spread or catch the infection, to evacuate their houses immediately, and of all the steps taken to prevent the spread of this disease, evacuation of

infected localities proved the most successful. The sight of the misery and panic in which I found my people at this time, caused me intense pain. With their nearest and dearest dead and dying, and themselves in constant dread of the future, they presented a pitiable spectacle. From village to village I went and asked how they were faring. "Plague has wrought havoc here" they would often answer, "but God be thanked, things are better now. We followed Your Highness' advice and evacuated our houses." And they were so attached to me, that when they heard that I contemplated returning to Bhopal on account of plague having broken out there, they came and begged me not to go, as my presence in their midst was a great blessing and they had not seen their Ruler for the last 30 years. Petitions were, however, pouring in from the people in the capital who wanted me to see the state of things with my own eyes, and comfort them with my presence. Simple-minded people say strange things under stress of anxiety, and I was extremely touched by the appeals made to me by the peasants of the countryside on the one hand, and the inhabitants of the capital on the other.

I had to come to Bhopal, as a great deal of work awaited me here, but my anxieties began to tell on my health which completely broke down, and I was compelled to seek change and relaxation. I took up residence at Samarda temporarily, while Nawab Nasrulla Khan, who had accompanied me throughout the tour, went to Dewangunj with his family for a short time. Obaidulla Khan had been in Bhopal all this time, but when the epidemic became extremely

violent, I made him leave the city, and he joined me at Samarda with his wife. After a short while I was very keen to return to Bhopal, but the Political Agent and my medical advisers, dissuaded me from leaving Samarda. The ignorance of the people and the prejudices to which they clung tenaciously, bred a foolish opposition to the advice of medical men, and enormous mischief was being done by the falsehoods of rumour stepping in where knowledge was absent. I felt it incumbent on me to return to Bhopal. I put up at the Hayat Afza garden and found it necessary that the orders for compulsory inoculation and evacuation of infected houses should be countermanded. I gave instructions for only such action to be taken as was agreed to both by the English doctors and the Unani physicians. At last our prayers were heard, and, by God's grace, the dark cloud began to lift. For three months the epidemic raged and then rapidly disappeared. It is impossible for me to finish this account without acknowledging my indebtedness to Major Impey, the Political Agent, and Colonel Weir, the Agency Surgeon, both of whom rendered me invaluable assistance at this time, and thus placed not only myself, but thousands of my people under a debt of everlasting gratitude.

CHAPTER X

The Second Anniversary of My Accession

The anniversary of the Ruler's accession has always been an occasion of great rejoicing in Bhopal. During my mother's lifetime a Darbar was held on this day, and after the usual salute of guns had been fired, the nobles and high officials of the State were presented to Her Highness, and offered congratulations. I continued the custom after my own accession, but in order to add a useful feature to the celebration, I gave orders for the annual reports of all departments being submitted in good time to be reviewed on this occasion. This was attended with good results, for the reports enabled me to survey the needs of the State, and also suitably to acknowledge the valuable work of deserving officials. I would have carried this proposal into effect on the very first anniversary of my accession, but, as the readers of previous chapters are aware, the whole administrative machinery of the State was out of gear, and it took me more than a year to evolve a semblance of order out of the chaos.

At the close of the second year of my rule, however, I held a public Darbar on the anniversary day (the 17th of Rabiul-Awwal 1321) in the Sadar Manzil Palace, and all the high civil and military officers as well as the nobles and *jagirdars* of the State were invited. On this occasion, which was the first of its kind in Bhopal, I made a speech in the course

of which I reviewed the whole field of administration in order to impress upon my officials that I was closely watching the progress of affairs in all departments. My speech, which was necessarily very long, was as follows:—

"Praise be to the Almighty by whose favour two years of my reign have been completed, and the third begins to-day. You are all well aware of the state of things in which I succeeded to my responsibilities on the death of Her late Highness of revered memory. The population of the State had decreased by one-third, and almost half the culturable land lay fallow. Means of irrigation had been destroyed, and the financial condition of the State precluded the possibility of reforms being introduced and new expenditure incurred. The garden, tended with such affection by my grandmother Nawab Sikandar Begam, had become a waste and a desert through sheer neglect and a series of untoward events. Bearing in mind the difficulties of my task, my sincere friend Colonel Meade, the Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, said on the occasion of my installation ceremony that great tact and statesmanship would be needed to restore prosperity and well being, and that the sage advice of my husband Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk Alijah Nazirud Dowlah Saheb Bahadur would be of great help to me. Of this invaluable help which was a boon and a blessing to me at the commencement of my rule, Providence deprived me, and the sudden death of my lamented husband left me desolate. Despite this calamity and the fact that soon after my assumption oft he reins of administration, Khan

Bahadur Haji Abdul Jabbar Khan, C.I.E., the Vazir of the State, resigned his post on the ground of advancing years, the Almighty in whom I have never trusted in vain, vouchsafed me strength to maintain the traditions of my ancestors, and discharge the immense responsibility of administering this territory and guiding the destinies of its people.

The state of administration being sorely in need of reform, I found it necessary in the interests of efficiency to divide the Vazir's office into two distinct departments, the revenue and the judicial, each of which was placed under a separate officer. One man, however able and experienced, could not possibly cope with the work of both the departments, so I reverted to the old practice of the State, and placed the Moinul Moham in charge of the Revenue department, and the Nasirul Moham in charge of the Judicial. My best thanks are due to those sincere friends of the State, the Hon'ble Mr. Bayley, Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, and Major Impey, the Political Agent, who expressed hearty appreciati on f this proposal and assisted me with valuable advice. For the office of Moinul Moham the services of Khan Bahadur Munshi Mumtaz Ali Khan have, at my instance, been lent by the Government of the United Provinces. Munshi Mumtaz Ali Khan possesses a vast experience of revenue work, and showed remarkable administrative capacity in Balrampur where, in connection with settlement operations, he achieved considerable success in evolving order out of widespread confusion. No appointment has yet been made to the office of Nasirul Moham, but I am in

hopes of soon finding a suitable man for the post.

I have not considered it advisable to proceed with the thirty years' settlement; for I have been assured on the best authority that a settlement for so long a period would, at this stage, be a cause of tremendous loss to the State. Although operations were sanctioned for this settlement before the demise of Her late Highness, the work had been carried out most imperfectly. Very few leases had been given, and a number of villages had no fixed rates of assessment, for the twenty years' settlement had expired, and abuses had crept in owing to there being nothing to take its place. I lost no time in consulting people whose opinion was entitled to great weight, and they were unanimously of the opinion that the next settlement should not be one of long duration. My attention has also been drawn to the Resolution of the Government of India on its land revenue policy, published in the "Gazette of India" of 18th January 1902, which confirmed me in the opinion that in the present state of our land records it would be the height of unwisdom for the State to introduce a settlement for a long period. I, therefore, decided upon a 17 years' settlement and gave orders for the necessary survey operations being taken in hand, but the Moinul Moham, Khan Bahadur Munshi Mumtaz Ali, who took over charge in the meanwhile, being of the opinion that the time was not ripe for a settlement of even 17 years, I have, on his advice, finally and definitely decided to take steps for a summary settlement for 5 years being carried out forthwith.

I am glad to say that the settlement of two dis-

tricts, the Eastern and the Southern, has already been completed. The operations, by God's grace, have been entirely successful, and people have come forward for the leases most willingly. The results hitherto achieved justify the hope that signs of prosperity and well being will soon be visible on a large scale, and that, relieved of many anxieties, the cultivators will soon bend their energies to bringing new land under the plough. The Moinul Moham has rendered most valuable help in connection with settlement operations, and I am sure the work of the remaining two districts will also soon be completed. It gives me great pleasure to present to him in this Darbar, in recognition of his services, a *khillat* of seven pieces with this silver inkstand and a thousand rupees in cash.

For some years the *mustajirs* have experienced great difficulty in the matter of seed grain. So poor are the resources of cultivators that the *mahajans* have ceased transacting business with them, and whenever the State has made itself responsible for the supply of seed-grain, the inefficiency of the officials has militated against the return being at all commensurate with the advance made by the State. This has had the inevitable result of driving cultivators into the clutches of the usurers who have come forward to advance grain or money on exhorbitant rates. Instructions were, therefore, given to Syed Qudrat Ali, the Naib Mal, to have the old system of the State re-introduced, and the limitation of the rate of interest on all advances to a maximum of 25 per cent. re-imposed. These instructions have been most satisfactorily carried out,

and gratifying results achieved in a short space of time. I present Munshi Qudrat Ali with a *khillat* of five pieces in appreciation of his eminently useful services.

Munshi Altaf Husain is an old official of the State, and has, for a number of years, occupied the post of Customs Commissioner during the reign of Her late Highness who honoured him on several occasions with *khillats* and *sanads* of appreciation. To his post, which he resigned some years ago, I reappointed him on the late Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk Bahadur's suggestion, and during the time that he has held it, he has abundantly justified my expectations, and judging from the figures of the year under review, he has succeeded in increasing the revenue of his department by Rs. 83,000. I think he richly deserves a *khillat* of five pieces which is now conferred upon him, and also an increment in his salary which is sanctioned from to-day.

Some reports of the Revenue department have still to come in, and though no further notice need be taken of this delay in view of the fact that these reports have been called for for the first time, I do look forward to a prompt submission of them at the proper time at the end of the new year. In order to acquaint myself with the state of things in the *mofussil*, I deputed my dear and beloved sons, Nasrulla Khan and Obaidulla Khan in the middle of the hot weather to undertake an extensive tour of all the four districts. In the course of their tour they received thousands of applications brimful of complaints, and that, in itself, was an index of the unsatisfactory condition of things generally. In order

to see things personally I have recently visited the Eastern and Southern districts myself, and am glad to say that I saw many signs of improvement and found that the tours of the Nawabzadas had produced good results and succeeded in renewing the confidence of the people in the good intentions of the administration.

The terrible havoc wrought by bubonic plague has aused me intense pain and anxiety. The Moinul Moham, Moulvi Mumtaz Ali Khan, has discharged his duties most tactfully, and deserves great credit for the way in which he has carried out my wishes. That mischief makers have been busy circulating falsehoods and playing upon the fears of the people, is I am sure, well known to you. With plague working havoc on the one hand, and the fires of fanaticism and prejudice bent on destruction on the other, the state of affairs was alarming enough to cause me to cut short my tour, and return to the capital. Praise be to the All-Merciful that the pestilence has disappeared from our midst, and now that we breathe reely once more, let us raise our hands to Him in prayer and seek forgiveness for our sins.

My people and I owe a heavy debt of gratitude to Colonel Weir, the Agency Surgeon, who has been foremost in directing plague operations, and whose labours at a time of extreme difficulty and general consternation, deserve recognition. Also I must thank my friend Major Impey for the valuable sympathy he has extended to us. He visited the Plague hospital at Bhopal several times in company with Colonel Weir, and his solicitude for the well being of the people was most remarkable. Dr.

Khushhal Das Joshi, the State Surgeon, Hakim Syed Nurul Hasan, the Chief Physician, and Miss Blong the Lady doctor in charge of the Lady Lansdowne Hospital have worked most energetically, and the useful work done by Mr Cook, the Health Officer, also deserves to be mentioned.

A number of old Police stations in the *mofussil* had been abolished by Khan Bahadur Moulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, the late Vazir. This had very undesirable results, inasmuch as the weakening of the police force led to a considerable increase in crime. Public security being the first concern of a State, I have had the abolished police stations re-established, and the latest returns reveal a gratifying improvement in the prevention and detection of offences against the law.

I have transferred Abdul Qayyum Khan to the Police department of which I have appointed him the Chief Superintendent on a year's probation in the first instance. His report for the last year being eminently satisfactory, I have pleasure in confirming Abdul Qayyum Khan in his new post, and have sanctioned an increment in his salary. I am sure that the ability and diligence with which he has devoted himself to his task, will be of great assistance to the State in effecting reforms in the Police department.

I cannot let this occasion pass without a reference to that happiest event of last year's history, the great Coronation Darbar at Delhi, at which I had the honour of representing my State. The gracious kindness and courtesy extended to me by Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duches of Connaught,

and Their Excellencies the Viceroy and Lady Curzon left a deep impression on my mind, and the memory of that remarkable assemblage at the capital of the Indian Empire, will ever abide with those who witnessed it. The arrangements connected with Bhopal Camp were satisfactorily carried out by Munshi Israr Hasan Khan, and the efficiency which he displayed in supervising the provision of supplies is particularly praiseworthy. Munshi Israr Hasan Khan has recently been in charge of the Arrears department, and his report for the last year is a record of useful work extremely well done. In appreciation of his services a *khillat* of five pieces is conferred upon him.

Military officers, too, have rendered notable services. Hafiz Mohammad Hasan Khan, Nusrat Jung, C.I.E., the *Mir Bakhshi* of the State forces, is an old officer of the State, who has seen service under four successive Rulers, and whose loyalty and integrity have always been beyond praise. The unflinching courage and staunch faithfulness which he displayed in the turbulent times of the Mutiny added a brilliant chapter to the history of Bhopal, and in recognition of his services the British Government were pleased to confer upon him the decoration of C.I.E. That he was specially invited to the Coronation Darbar, was a source of supreme gratification to me, and I felt it as an honour to the State. It gives me particular pleasure on this occasion to present him with a jewelled sword which, I believe, is a suitable acknowledgment of a soldier's services.

The devotion and attachment of my House to the British Crown is a sacred tradition which I have

inherited from my ancestors, and a visible expression of which are the Imperial Service Troops of the State. That the soldierly bearing and efficiency of these troops made an excellent impression on the occasion of the Delhi Darbar, and was repeatedly acknowledged by high officers of the British Government, is, therefore, a matter of profound satisfaction to me. And this satisfaction is further enhanced by the complimentary accounts which I have received of the services rendered by the Imperial Service orderlies sent by the State to the South African War with a batch of remounts. These services have been acknowledged in highly gratifying terms by the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State, and Their Excellencies the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief.

The meritorious services of Sardar Bahadur Major Karim Beg, the Commandant of the Imperial Service Troops, deserve recognition, and I have pleasure in honouring him with a *khillat* of seven pieces and a golden plume which should, henceforward, be the distinctive mark of the headgear of the Commanding Officer. The Imperial Service Troops, by reason of the purpose for which they are maintained, have always been an object of keen attention on the part of the State, and their splendid efficiency is an index of the solicitude of the administration for their well being. It is my wish that the other military units should be likewise raised to a state of efficiency which would fit them to take their place in time of need alongside of the Imperial Service Troops in the service of the King-Emperor. To this end a new unit, comprising two squadrons of Cavalry and two companies of Infantry has been created, and

recruits have been admitted to it after undergoing a process of selection. I take this opportunity of offering my warmest congratulations to Sardar Bahadur Mirza Karim Beg and other officers and men of the Victoria Lancers on the good name they have won and the compliments they have received.

I close my speech now with the prayer that the Almighty may always keep the State steadfast in its attachment to the British Crown, and vouchsafe His blessings to me in the task of administration."

CHAPTER XI

THE BIRTH OF BIRJIS JAHAN BEGAM

THE third year of my reign opened in most auspicious circumstances. On the 17th of Rabiul Awwal, the day of my accession anniversary, tidings reached me of a happy event being expected in the house of my second son Obaidulla Khan. The news that I would soon, by God's favour, become a grandmother, was particularly welcome after the worries and anxieties I had gone through continuously for a long time. All joys, it is true, relieve care and anxiety in the same way as the rays of light dispel the gloom of darkness, but the joys associated with one's children have a peculiar charm which, I think, is enhanced when the children's children are concerned.

In the morning at about six o'clock I received a letter from my Political Secretary to the effect that Major Impey, the Political Agent, wanted to see me immediately on official business of considerable importance. The palace being full of women who had gathered in anticipation of the happy event we were all looking forward to, I received Major Impey in my office. After the usual exchange of greetings I told him that a baby was soon expected in the harem of Obaidulla Khan. Major Impey was very glad to hear of it, and said that he, too, was the bearer of happy news, and had brought me an autograph letter from His Imperial

Majesty the King-Emperor. This mark of royal favour, which I could not but regard as a high compliment to me and my family, gladdened my heart in a way it is impossible to describe. In his letter His Majesty had grciously thanked me for the casket and the address which I had submitted through Lord Curzon on the occasion of the Delhi Darbar. I took the royal *farman* in my hands, and standing up thanked Major Impey for the great honour that had been conferred on me. I told Major Impey that a salute was fired in Bhopal whenever an important *kharita* was received from the Viceroy, and this being a letter from His Imperial Majesty himself, I intended giving orders for a royal salute being fired from the Fategarh fort immediately. Major Impey replied that I could do as I wished, and knowing that I had many calls on my time on that day, he took his departure after a brief conversation. I had reason for hastening my foot-steps. The fact that the new lady doctor who was attending my daughter-in-law did not speak Urdu, was causing me some anxiety. Miss Blong, the Lady Superintendent of the Lady Lansdowne Hospital, whose courtesy and sympathy had endeared her to the people of Bhopal, was away on six months' leave. The years which Miss Blong spent at the Lady Lansdowne Hospital constitute the brightest chapter of the history of that institution, and the popularity to which she attained by her scrupulous regard for *parda* arrangements, and her solicitude for the well-being of all classes, is remembered to this day. Her place at this time, was temporarily filled by Miss MacLaren, who had recently

arrived from England, and had no experience of this country or any knowledge of its chief language I being the only person in the zenana who could converse with her in English, it was very necessary that I should be present to help her. As soon as I entered my daughter-in-law's room with the royal *farman* in my hand, the birth of the child was announced, and indeed it was a most auspicious coincidence that the first thing to cast its shadow on the newborn was the autograph letter of H.I.M. the King-Emperor. My eyes were aglow with happiness. A child is a thing of joy to rich and poor alike, but the new arrival, on this particular occasion, seemed to make a special appeal to my affections, and voices from all sides, difficult to locate and almost inaudible, seemed to whisper messages of congratulation.

The walls of the palace were soon resounding with the buzz of animated conversation. Happiness imparts a peculiar accent to the spoken word, and there was no mistaking the note of joy in the congratulations showered on the child's parents at this time. If the first child is a daughter, it is considered a most auspicious circumstance by educated Massalmans, for the firstborn of the Holy Prophet, Allah's benedictions upon him, was a daughter. Daughters of the House of Bhopal, moreover, had guided the destinies of the State for the last four generations, and since I come last in the line of Begams, I felt particularly delighted that a daughter was once again the eldest of the family in a coming generation. Orders were immediately given for the customary salute of 5 guns being fired, and the instructions were that the salute of the Political Agent should be fired first,

then the royal salute in honour of the autograph letter received from His Imperial Majesty, and lastly 5 guns announcing the birth of my granddaughter. The continuous boom of the guns for about half an hour was a fitting indication of the extraordinary joy God had blessed me with on that happy morning. The 18th of Rabiul Awwal was, indeed, a happy day. As soon as the news spread, nobles and officials gathered at the Palace to offer congratulations, for they shared the joy and the honour which God had granted me and my State on that day. News of my granddaughter's birth was, according to custom, immediately communicated to the Political Agent and the Agent to the Governor General in Central India.

Of this occasion Mulla Abdul Husain was not slow to take advantage. Having enjoyed my mother's confidence in her lifetime, he had seen happy days, but his frauds and embezzlements having been discovered, he was now undergoing trial in a court of law. As soon as he heard of the birth of my granddaughter, he repaired to the Sadar Manzil, and pleaded for mercy. "I am an old man now," he said, "and it was at an early age that I entered your mother's service. I have carried you and your children in my arms, and the favours with which your mother honoured me are well known to you. Have pity upon your mother's old servant, whose very flesh and bone are made of your mother's salt. I am guilty, I confess I am; but have pity on me, grant me pardon and soothe my afflicted heart just as the Almighty has soothed yours by joy and happiness to-day". Abdul Husain's request was granted.

On the 24th of Rabiul Awwal, the *aqiqa* ceremony was performed in the Sadar Manzil, and the day was observed as a State holiday. Members of my family and the *jagirdars* and officials gathered at the Sadar Manzil, and the baby was brought out of the zenana at about four o'clock in the afternoon. The troops in the palace square presented arms, and the Band struck up a suitable tune. The infant was placed on a silver couch covered by a carpet worked in gold thread and a cushion encased in an elaborate covering. Resting on the arms of Begam Ayah, the nurse of my youngest son, the baby's head was shaved by Ammu Khalifa, and her name Birjis Jahan Begam, which I had chosen for her, was announced to the assembly. Five prisoners were released from the Central Jail, and among them were two sons of Rao Mazboot Singh, the *jagirdar* of Nai Garhayya, who had been convicted of dacoity and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment shortly before my mother's death. They had served about three years of their term, but I set them free hoping that, being sons of a prosperous family, they regretted their misdeeds and would mend their ways. The result, however, was quite contrary to my expectations, as will be seen in a later chapter. In accordance with the old custom, Ammu Khalifa was presented with a necklace, a silver bowl and a purse of four hundred rupees. The *aqiqa* dinner was held under a *shamiana* in the Sadar Manzil square on the 25th of Rabiul Awwal, and all the nobles, high officials and prominent citizens of the town were invited. I wrote to all my European friends and informed them of the birth of my grand-

daughter. The letters of congratulation which I received from them in reply afforded me great pleasure.

The affection and regard which Colonel Meade had for my family, is evidenced by the words which he wrote to me from Baroda. "I must offer you" he said "my most hearty congratulations on the birth of your granddaughter Birjis Jahan. I hope she may grow up wise and good like her illustrious ancestors including Your Highness yourself. I hope I may have the good fortune to see her, for I have, as you know, met five generations of your family: the Qudsia Begam, the Sikandar Begam, Shah Jahan Begam, Your Highness and your family. Now this is the sixth generation. That Your Highness' descendants may increase and multiply, and that you may be happy and prosperous, is the wish of all your friends, including Mrs. Meade and myself."

The letter from the Hon'ble Mr. Bayley, the Agent to the Governor General in Central India, was also full of kind words: "Ordinarily" he wrote "I should hesitate to offer my congratulations to the Ruler of a State on the birth of a granddaughter but ladies have, in the past, and in the present, played such a distinguished part in the history of Bhopal, that I feel I can safely tell Your Highness of the great pleasure with which I have just heard from Major Impey of the birth of Sahebzada Obaidulla Khan's daughter, and wish long life and happiness to the new *sahibzadi* and to all your family."

It is only natural that parents should, after the marriage of their sons and daughters, look forward

to the joys which make the latter appreciate parental affection all the more. After years of anxiety this event of joy was particularly welcome, and Birjis Jahan's birth greatly soothed my heart so sorely afflicted by the death of my own daughters. In the celebration of the birth of Birjis, I followed exactly the lines on which Nawab Sikandar Begam had celebrated my own birth. The nobles, officials and all my people, shared my joy, and took part in the ceremonies. Numerous odes and congratulatory verses were written. Almost everybody desired to present a *jora* for the new arrival, but with a few exceptions, I did not allow anybody to bring more than a *kurta* and *topee*, and extravagance was specially forbidden. In spite of this the presentations went on for months, and the Sadar Manzil used to be full of guests almost every day. Each noble and official brought a *jora* or a *kurta-topee*, and nearly the most gorgeous of all were the presentations made by Munshi Mumtaz Ali Khan, the Moinul Moham and Munshi Israr Hasan Khan, the Assistant Nasirul Moham. On the 16th Rajab, Nawab Nasrulla Khan brought *joras* for his little niece, and for his brothers, sister-in-law and myself. The Cavalry and Infantry regiments of the State accompanied the procession. I visited the Ali Manzil to partake in the ceremonies on behalf of Nasrulla Khan, and after a short stay returned to the Sadar Manzil to assist Obaidulla Khan in the arrangements for the reception of his guests. The procession reached the palace at five in the afternoon. The guests stopped at the Moti-Mahal, and only a few persons accompanied Nawab Nasrulla Khan to the Sadar Manzil, where he presented his younger

brothers with costly garments, and his niece with robes and valuable ornaments.

On the 19th Rajab *joras* were presented by Hamidulla Khan and myself. The troops assembled in front of the Taj Mahal, and after the nobles and officials had arrived, the *jora* procession started at about four o'clock. Its route lay through the Budhwara Gate, and thence by the main street to the Sadar Manzil. Police and sowars lined the road on either side. The elephants bearing the *mahi-maratib* led the procession, followed by the State Band playing a lively selection of music. The Imperial Service Troops and the Ehtaramia companies of Infantry came next, followed by a number of bullocks laden with fruits, goats with their horns encased in silver sheaths, elephants laden with rice and pulse on one side and basketfuls of fowls on the other. Then came a line of tray-bearers who carried the presents, and behind them were people on elephants and in beautifully decorated carriages. When the procession reached the Sadar Manzil, the guests were conducted to the Moti-Mahal, and the Band struck up tunes suitable to the occasion.

After I had sat down, the presentations began. First of all Obaidulla Khan gave a *jora* to his elder brother, which compliment the latter returned with presentations to both Obaidulla and Hamidulla. Munshi Mansab Ali then stood up and the presentation of *joras* to the nobles and officials began. Each came as his name was called out, and received his *jora* from the hands of Israr Hasan Khan and the Kamdar of the *Deorhi Khas*. Those assembled at the Moti-Mahal received their *joras* from the Naib

BIRJIS JAHAN BEGAM.

Kamdar. Distribution of *itr* and *pan* brought the ceremony to a close.

The *chhati* ceremony is, as a rule, performed by the maternal grandfather of the child, but in my family ceremonies of this nature have always been undertaken by the State. On this occasion the relations of the late Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk gave expression to their joy by sending *joras* from Jelalabad for the Sahebzadas and Birjis Jahan Begam, and Chanda Begam sahiba, the mother-in-law of the Sahebzadas, celebrated the *chhati* ceremony.

The total cost of the celebration to the State was Rs. 6,880.

CHAPTER XII

DISTRIBUTION OF CORONATION MEDALS. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION—THE UNANI SYSTEM OF MEDICINE

WITH a view to the commemoration of the great Coronation Darbar, His Majesty the King-Emperor had accorded his sanction to the distribution of gold and silver medals struck after the design approved by His Majesty. These medals were intended for the important nobles and officials of the Indian States, and I received five of them through the Political Agent in Bhopal. Two of the medals were indicated for Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Sahebzada Obaidulla Khan, and the choice of recipients for the remaining three was left to my discretion. For these I selected Hamidulla Khan because of his association with the Darbar as a page of Lord Curzon, Maulvi Mumtaz Ali Khan the Revenue Minister on account of his being the highest official of the State, and Munshi Israr Hasan Khan owing to the excellent work done by him in connection with the arrangements for the Bhopal Camp at Delhi.

Shortly before the arrival of these medals I had received the royal *farman* referred to in the previous Chapter, and my people were very eager to know its contents. I, therefore, held a Darbar at which I requested the Political Agent to distribute the medals, and had the royal *farman* read to the assembly.

Major Impey, on rising to comply with my request, delivered a short speech, in the course of which he said that although I had decided upon making a pilgrimage to the Hedjaz, I had deferred the fulfilment of that pious wish, as soon as I heard of His Majesty's intention to hold the Imperial Coronation Darbar at Delhi, and that I had, in view of the traditional devotion of my house to the British Crown, considered it my duty to be present on that historic occasion. He spoke of the great honour conferred upon me by His Imperial Majesty, and of the happy coincidence of the royal *farman* having been received on the day on which my granddaughter was born. At the end of his speech Major Impey referred to the historic importance of the great Assemblage at Delhi, which had attracted not only the Rulers of Indian States, but the Chiefs of Southern Arabia and Baluchistan as well, to do homage to the King-Emperor. After the medals had been distributed, the Naib Mir Munshi rose and read to the assembly my speech which was as follows :—

"Major Impey and gentlemen,

First and foremost I must needs render thanks to the Almighty for having linked the destiny of India with that of the British Empire, which has maintained the honour and dignity of the Indian Princes in a way unparalleled in the annals of the country. And great is the debt of gratitude which I owe to the Emperor who, in reply to the address which I submitted to His Imperial Majesty through His Excellency the Viceroy on the occasion of the Coronation Darbar, has honoured me with a *farman*, and, with gracious courtesy, accepted

my sentiments as a token of the attachment and loyalty of my House to his Person and Throne. The gracious words in which His Imperial Majesty has addressed me, will be treasured for all time in my family with feelings of devotion and gratitude. I consider it very necessary that the royal *farman* as well as its translation should be read out to you in order that my people may realise the graciousness of His Imperial Majesty to his faithful adherents. The *farman* is as follows :—

Buckingham Palace,
March 30*th*, 1903.

"Your Highness,—The address which Your Highness has been kind enough to send on the occasion of my Coronation, has been received by me, and it is with great pleasure that I accept this token of your devotion and loyalty.

Trusting that Your Highness is in the enjoyment of good health.

I remain,
Your Highness' sincere Friend,
(Sd.) EDWARD R. AND I.

Her Highness the Begam of Bhopal."

"What could be a greater honour than this for the Ruling Princes of India. I should feel most grateful to my friends, Mr. Bayley and Major Impey, if, through the proper channel, they would let His Imperial Majesty know how delighted I am at receiving this valuable mark of royal favour. They would also, I hope, inform His Imperial Majesty that on the very day on which I received the royal *farman*, a daughter was born to my son, Sahebzada

Obaidulla Khan, as though the Almighty had ordained that she should first see the light on one of the brightest days in the history of her family. On account of this happy coincidence I shall always regard Birjis Jehan as particularly fortunate.

These medals which have been received from the British Government and have just been distributed by Major Impey, are evidence of the favour which the British Crown has always extended to me, and I am sure that in expressing deep gratefulness to His Imperial Majesty the King-Emperor and His Excellency the Viceroy, I am voicing the sentiments of all the recipients.

That the Almighty may always keep me and my posterity loyal and devoted to the British Crown, that long life and happiness be vouchsafed to Their Imperial Majesties the King and Queen, and that Their Majesties' kindness to me may ever increase, is my earnest prayer."

Garlands and *itr* and *pan* were distributed on the conclusion of my speech, and the Darbar came to an end. Hamidulla Khan, as already described was awarded a Darbar medal, on account of having acted as a Page to the Viceroy at the Royal Chapter. The medal was presented to him by the Political Agent at the Lal Kothi. On receiving the medal Hamidulla, who was then only seven years old, read the following brief speech :—

"I thank the Almighty God who has blessed me with two great boons though I am so young. I had the honour of attending the Coronation of the King-Emperor as a Page of Honour to His Excellency the Viceroy,and now to-day I have received this beautiful

medal sent by the King-Emperor. I am exceedingly grateful to His Imperial Majesty, to His Excellency the Viceroy and to my friend Major Impey. What a good thing it would be if Major Impey would inform His Imperial Majesty and the Viceroy of my cordial gratefulness."

Everybody was surprised at the bold delivery of Hamidulla Khan at that age, and quite spontaneously Major Impey remarked "It is a family gift, and he will one day make an excellent speaker."

Having first attended to the needs of those departments which demanded my urgent attention, I bent my energies to the introduction of the necessary reforms in the Judicial department. The work of this department is of a particularly responsible nature, for it administers justice, and it is very important that courts should be presided over by honest and competent men. A change of the whole *personnel* from top to bottom was hardly called for, so retaining those officials whose ability and integrity could be depended upon, I replaced the others by competent men. Munshi Enayat Husain Khan, the Assistant Nasirul Moham, was a retired Deputy Collector of British India. The weight of years had begun to tell upon the efficiency of his work, and, moreover, he lacked experience of legal matters. In his place I appointed Munshi Israr Hasan Khan, who had been the Superintendent of Police in the days of my mother, and the Superintendent of the realization of revenue arrears in my own time, and whose honesty and efficiency had won my approbation. His work as a Tahsildar and Deputy Collector under the British Government had also been well spoken of, and he

richly deserved a promotion. He was raised to the grade of Rs. 400 and took charge of his duties on the 25th Rabiul-Awwal 1321 A. H. Maulvi Syed Nasiruddin, whose services were lent to the State by the Government of Bengal took over charge of the post of Nasirul Moham on the 1st Rajab. To the post of Sadrul Moham which requires in its incumbent a sound knowledge of the intricacies of law, I appointed Mr. Mohammad Suleman, Bar-at-Law, and Mr. Jamshedji Rustomji, B.A., B.L., who combined administrative experience with legal qualifications, was appointed City Magistrate.

My mother, Nawab Shah Jahan Begam, had established a Legislative Council which held its sittings under the presidency of Her Highness herself, but during the ministry of M. Imtiaz Ali its importance had steadily diminished, and, in the time of Moulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, the Council had, to all intents and purposes, ceased to exist. The rules and regulations of the State were for the first time codified during the reign of my grandmother Nawab Sikandar Begam, and as soon as they were published, printed copies were supplied to the Nazims and Tahsildars. Foundations were also laid at that time for the codification of the Criminal Law. Her late Highness displayed keen interest in the work of legislation, and the *Tanzimat-i-Shahjahani* which embodies the laws and rules governing civil suits, is the outcome of the time and attention she gave to this matter. But in the stormy days which Bhopal experienced in the time of Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan, and later on during the ministry of Imtiaz Ali, the existing laws and regulations were

thrown overboard and the work of the legislative section was conducted on principles dictated by personal likes and dislikes. The notices and circulars issued at that time, although appearing to have the well being of the State for their object, were really screens for conferring special privileges and powers on the favoured officials. What the absence of a codified law in respect both of the civil suits and criminal cases, must have meant to everybody concerned, can readily be imagined. In the time of Munshi Imtiaz Ali some bye-laws and codes of procedure were drafted and received Her Highness' assent, but enormous leeway had still to be made up. Maulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan did not pay overmuch attention to the legislative side, and confined himself to issuing a few instructions for the guidance of lower courts. I have always considered the efficiency of the legislative side to be the bed rock of all administrative progress. The whole work of administration, the maintenance of order and security, the redress of wrongs, everything depends upon the laws of the country, and upon the way they are enforced. Munshi Mumtaz Ali Khan, the Moinul Moham and myself held different views on the subject, but I could never be shaken from my conviction that sound laws and equitable administration of them are indispensable to all progress. That laws and rules are restrictive of personal power, is very true, but they are a blessing to the people who generally are the victims of the misuse of personal power.

I, therefore, revived the Legislative Council, and named it Majlis-i-Mashwara. For its membership I selected those officials who were conversant with

the usages and customs of the State as well as with the general condition of the people. It was my great desire to include a number of non-officials also, for the presence of non-official element in a legislative body is always a source of strength, and a guarantee of the rights and privileges of the people receiving due consideration. But to my great disappointment I could not find a single member of the general public qualified, either by reason of experience or of education, to be a worthy representative of public opinion. Local bar was the only public body to which I could look for assistance. The vakils too, unfortunately, were not particularly remarkable for their efficiency, but they, at least, had some idea of the needs and requirements of the people, and were, moreover, intimately connected with the work of legislation. I nominated a few of them to the membership of the Council, and appointed Syed Abdul-Aziz, Vakil, as the Secretary of that body. It was decided that after deliberation in the Council and the incorporation of amendments, all laws should, in a complete form, be put up for my formal assent before being promulgated. On the 5th Jamadiul-Awwal 1321 A.H. was held the first session of the Council, and before my departure on the pilgrimage, a number of meetings were regularly held in the Sadar Manzil Hall.

The Unani system of medicine has been in vogue in India for centuries, and the Mussalmans have in the past identified themselves with it completely, so much so, that they have made the system their own. Their incessant labours for its improvement and development won remarkable success in

times gone by, and the pages of past history speak of many great physicians who won imperishable renown. The callous neglect which Indian Mussalmans have, of late years, displayed towards sciences generally, could not but effect this system of treatment which our forefathers prized and cherished, and had it not been for the well-known families of the Hakims of Delhi and Lucknow, who have been the saviours of this valuable branch of human knowledge from extinction, this useful science would long since have departed from our midst. The valuable work which Hakim Ajmal Khan of Delhi and Hakim Abdul Aziz of Lucknow have done in this connection, has laid the present as well as the future generations under a deep debt of gratitude to them.

It is true that the modern science of medical treatment has made immense progress and achieved marvellous discoveries, but the majority of the Indian public are still wedded to the Unani system of treatment, and the lives of millions of people depend upon the efficiency of the Hakims. There are two great reasons for the popularity of the Unani system. The first is the fact of the people having been using it sucessfully for centuries, and the second is the comparative cheapness of the Unani drugs which is a great consideration with the poor classes.

The British Government has provided medical relief on a remarkably generous scale in British India, and has opened hospitals almost everywhere to serve the needs of the people. India would have reason to be all the more grateful, if the Government took the Unani system of treatment too under its patronage. In Bhopal the Unani system has been popular for a

very long time, and a Unani physician is maintained in every tahsil by the State. A great shortcoming, however, which soon attracted my attention was, that there was no standard of efficiency for these physicians. There was no particular test or examination by which their abilities could be judged, and it was, in my opinion, not free from risk to repose full confidence in the skill of these hakims without any discrimination. Surgery, moreover, which is a very important branch of the medical science to-day, has, for centuries, been so completely neglected by the Unani physicians, that the surgical cases are never handled by them, and are invariably passed on for treatment to *jarrahs* whose sole qualification is this that they are clever barbers. That the latter frequently inflict permanent injury on those who undergo their treatment, is hardly surprising. The important services which Hakim Ajmal Khan saheb has rendered to the country towards removing this great defect, are beyond all praise. All one can say is, "With the Almighty is his reward."

The late Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk who took a keen interest in all matters connected with medical relief, frequently spoke to me of the great disability under which the Unani physicians labour. He had given deep thought to the matter, but alas! he passed to his rest, and all his schemes were buried with him. Ever since the untimely death of my daughter Asif Jahan Begam, I had contemplated associating her memory with some really useful institution. I thought of various plans, but on the suggestion of Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk I made up my mind eventually to found a Unani Medical school after Asif Jahan's

name. I took special care to include "Surgery" in the curriculum, and made it compulsory for all physicians of the State to obtain the diploma of the new institution.

The foundation stone of this Medical school was laid by Nawab Nasrulla Khan on the 11th Jamadius Sani 1321 A.H. in the presence of the nobles and important officials and citizens of Bhopal. Hakim Syed Nurul Hasan the Chief Physician of the State, read the following address :—

"We are all sad witnesses of the decline of the Unani system of treatment which has seen glorious days in times gone by. And if we continue to display the same indifference towards it, the valuable work of our ancestors will be thrown away, and the condition of the Unani system will go from bad to worse. One of its branches, surgery, has already disappeared, and, to my mind, it is no small consolation that the system of medicine still retains its hold upon the masses. The reason of this is the simplicity and safety of the treatment. Mostly vegetable products, roots of plants, and fruits and flowers are used, and poisonous drugs are much avoided. Even the liniments indicated for external use are quite safe and should a patient drink them by mistake, no harm will be done. Similarly if the prescribed dose is exceeded no great danger will be incurred. The only drawback in the treatment is that the Unani physicians cannot handle surgical cases. Our books are not silent on this branch of the medical science, but the difficulty is that it has been completely neglected. It is, therefore, very necessary that practical steps should be taken to revive this side of the old system.

The physicians, instead of entrusting this task to ignorant barbers or *jarrahs* as they are called, should themselves practise the surgeon's art, not with the old instruments of a by-gone age, but with the up-to-date improvements of modern days. The interest taken in our system of treatment by the late Nawab Ehitshaul Mulk Alijah Bahadur is well known. With the extraordinary intelligence and strong common sense which characterised his endeavours, he had made himself thoroughly conversant with the literature on the subject during the prolonged illness of the late Sahibzadi Asif Jahan Begam, and even clever doctors and Unani physicians attached great value to his diagnosis and suggestions for treatment. To our misfortune he passed away before he could do anything for the science he loved so much. Her Highness the Nawab Begam, however, has supplied a long felt want by establishing this school in commemoration of the late Sahibzadi saheb. It is to be hoped that this institution will be a worthy monument. May God reward Her Highness, and enhance her happiness and prosperity. This school will attempt to reconcile the old Unani treatment to modern needs, and its products will, it is hoped, combine a knowledge of the old system with that of the Western medical science. Her Highness has kindly sanctioned a suitable staff for the school which will enjoy the special patronage of all her sons. Colonel Weir, the Agency Surgeon, who is a very well-known medical authority, and has a valuable knowledge of indigenous drugs, has kindly consented to inspect this school from time to time, and to assist the staff with his valuable

advice. The State Surgeon and the Chief Physician will supervise the work of the institution. I will now conclude my address with the prayer that this institution may long flourish under the patronage of Her Highness and her worthy sons."

Hakim Syed Nurul Hasan having finished his address, Nawab Nasrulla Khan rose and made the following speech :—

" Gentlemen,

Before saying anything on behalf of my brothers and myself I consider it my duty to thank my revered and well beloved mother Her Highness the Nawab Begam saheba, who has entrusted me with the task of performing the opening ceremony of this institution which owes its existence to Her Highness' keen solicitude for the well being of her people. The Hakim sahib has already referred to the aims and objects of this school, and it is undeniable that the union of the up-to-date medical science of the West with the Unani system of treatment will be productive of excellent results. Viewed from this standpoint the Asafia Medical school deserves every encouragement and support. It is a specially fortunate circumstance that Colonel Weir, the Agency Surgeon, has kindly promised to lend his valuable assistance. He has written to express his great regret at his inability to be present here to-day owing to unavoidable circumstances, and I am sure you will all join me in thanking him for his genuine sympathy with our objects.

As this school has been started on the suggestion of Hakim Nurul Hasan and Dr. Khushhal Das Joshi, I have every reason to believe that these

officers will devote great attention to its work, and strive energetically for the attainment of its purpose. It is hardly necessary for me to say that the association of the school with the name of my late lamented sister, is an adequate guarantee of the fact that my brothers and myself will always take the greatest interest in the welfare and prosperity of what I am sure will be one of the most useful institutions of Her Highness' capital. I will now bring my remarks to a close with the prayer that the Almighty may shower His choicest blessings on Her Highness."

Several complaints had reached me regarding the inferior quality of the Unani medicines and drugs sold in the bazaar. To sell inferior or adulterated drugs is an offence punishable under the regulations of the State, but instead of putting the cumbrous machinery of the law into motion, I invited suggestions for an alternative plan better suited to serve the purpose in view. I ascertained the views of Majlis-i-Mashwara on the subject, and with their cooperation I had a shop opened in the town for the sale of drugs under the direct supervision of the Chief Physician. A sum of money was advanced by the State, and the Chief Physician saw to it that no inferior or adulterated drugs were stocked. The President of the Municipality was also made responsible for periodical inspection. This shop is supposed to be a branch of the Asafia Medical school, and has completely justified my expectations. It has set an excellent example, and the druggists in the city have been compelled by competition to improve the quality of their supplies.

The needs of local self-government have always been an object of my careful attention. British India has set the pace, and the progress made in this connection in other parts of the world, has convinced me of the desirability of associating the people with matters connected with their welfare. But just as foundation comes first, and superstructure afterwards, so is it very necessary that education and enlightenment must precede the wrangling over rights and obligations. 'First deserve and then desire' is a motto quite as applicable to the field of administration as to the other walks of life, and democratic institutions, unless based on the sure foundation of widespread education of the right type, are, to my mind, highly unsafe. In my administrative work I have found myself hampered on all sides and at all times by high walls of solid ignorance which it is impossible to scale except by the ladder of education which it always takes years upon years to build. Statesmanship, I believe, is but another name for making administrative measures suit the times, and all that the circumstances in Bhopal called for, was a Municipal Committee which would discharge its functions smoothly and efficiently. A Committee was, therefore, established before my departure on pilgrimage, a complete set of rules was drawn up, and the town of Bhopal divided into sixteen circles, from each of which two members were nominated to the Committee. The powers and responsibilities of the Committee were fully defined. Among the members nominated were nobles, vakils, merchants and officials of the State, and care was taken that all classes and creeds were duly represent-

ed. The publication of a Gazette was arranged for to chronicle the proceedings of the Committee meetings, and the first issue appeared on the 15th Rajab 1321 A. H. (corresponding with the 17th October 1903 A. C.) On my return from the pilgrimage it was a great pleasure to me to find that the Municipal Committee had done really useful work, and had abundantly justified my hopes.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SULTANIA AND ALEXANDRA SCHOOLS

I HAVE always held very strong opinions on the subject of the injustice displayed by the Mussulmans generally in the matter of female education. In Bhopal the popular attitude towards the problem is not so very unreasonable as in other parts of the country, chiefly because of the State having been ruled over by women for a long space of time. But a particularly narrow significance is attached to the phrase female education everywhere, and it is not understood to mean anything more than a perfunctory reading of the Holy Quran, and a superficial knowledge of the Urdu language. Such conceptions of education are to be strongly deprecated, for, in my opinion, imperfect education is worse than none at all. The sweet waters of this spring should either be drunk deep or not tasted at all: hence the necessity of regular schools for communal education. It is a stupid thing, to my mind, to teach the girls to read and write, and then leave them to their fate. The very least that should be done for them, is to give them a thorough grounding in things that matter, and to awaken the dormant soul in them. A knowledge of household matters is also, in my judgment, very necessary, and needlework and domestic economy need to be included in the curricula of all girls' schools.

With that ideal in my mind's eye, I took steps to establish a girls' school in Bhopal. I soon dis-

covered that it would take some time to overcome the reluctance of the people to send their daughters to a school. Nevertheless, I convened a public meeting in the Moti-Mahal on the 21st Rajab and Munshi Mumtaz Ali Khan, who presided at it, was assisted by prominent nobles and officials. At the meeting a number of people came forward to move and second resolutions in support of my project, and quite eloquent speeches were made expressive of sympathy with the object in view. Promises to send girls to the school were also forthcoming. But there was an ominus silence, too, in certain quarters, and I knew what that meant. Through my personal influence, however, and because of the scheme itself having appealed to those who were abreast of the times, fairly satisfactory progress was soon made towards the establishment of the school. The opposition was mostly from the *pardah* point of view, and to that I had already given careful consideration, for I am myself an admirer of the *parda* system, and consider it most essential to the well being of the Mussulman community. The provision of suitable mistresses for the school proved a tremendous obstacle. European ladies did not suit, principally because of the language difficulty. Not knowing Urdu well, they could not be expected to make their pupils understand the fine shades of meaning or the nice intricacies of pronunciation. With pupils speaking a language totally different from that of the teachers, it is impossible for that close communion to be developed, which is the very essence of school life. Mussalman mistresses were most difficult to obtain. And, over and

above all that, there was no suitable curriculum which could easily be adopted for the new school The British Government has, no doubt, made adequate provision for the education of girls in British India. It has opened schools under its own supervision, and sanctioned generous grants for private institutions. But the Government cannot fully understand our domestic and religious requirements, nor, indeed, is it the function of the Government to do so. This part of the reponsibility ought to be borne by the Mussalmans themselves. It is they who should investigate the needs of the community and suggest plans for educational advancement. It is perhaps forgotten that women, too, are half the community, and no real progress can be achieved if the educational needs of this important half are neglected and starved. With the problem of female education and its requirements I have dealt in a separate book, which, I hope, will soon be published.

Although greatly handicapped by the absence of a well-thought-out curriculum, I made the best of my resources, and made a start with a few classes in which the Holy Quran with its translation, Urdu, Arithmetic, Geography, and Domestic Economy were taught. The opening ceremony of the new institution which was named the Sultania Girls' school, was performed on the 21st Rajab 1321 A.H., in an annexe of the Taj Mahal, and the school rooms and the adjoining grounds were tastefully decorated for the occasion with flags and bunting of all colours.

The number on the school rolls during the first year was 140. All the girls were under ten years of age. Three mistresses—Mughlani Khanam, Nazeer

Bi and Zainab Bi, were appointed. Of these the last two had received their education at their own home in Bhopal, and the first named at Delhi. They were sufficiently efficient to make a start with. Maulvi Syed Mohammed Ali Rizvi, a pious old man, was appointed Superintendent, and closed conveyances were provided by the State to bring all the girls to the school in the morning and take them back in the afternoon. I should like to take this occasion to reiterate my opinion that competent mistresses are absolutely essential for a satisfactory solution of the problem of female education, and until and unless such mistresses are produced in larger numbers, it is idle to entertain hopes of success.

The backwardness of the people in matters educational, was a source of keen disappointment to me. The entire population of the State had not yet produced a single graduate, and in spite of the fact that a High school had existed at the capital for a number of years, not more than twenty students had passed the Matriculation examination. The condition of the boys of higher classes was simply deplorable. Entertaining a contemptuous opinion of all education, and slaves of old customs, they were quite content to pass their lives as devotees of ignorance and ardent admirers of show and extravagance. In all Indian states the relatives of the Ruler receive pensions or allowances for their maintenance. With the increase in family after a few generations, the individual allowances dwindle down to insignificant amounts, and it sometimes happens that members of houses, whose founders were *jagirdars* and enjoyed princely incomes,

have to be content with a few rupees a month. For people reduced to such extremities, there is only one remedy—education. The education of the boys of higher classes has been a matter of special concern to the Government of India, and the various Chiefs' colleges and the Imperial Cadet Corps are indications of the Government's solicitude for the welfare of the scions of ruling families. The needs of the boys of these families being entirely distinct from those of the other classes, it is only fitting that the Government of India should have made special arrangements to suit special circumstances. The Chiefs' Colleges of India are not primarily intended for those who, later on, have to earn their own livelihood, and although the education imparted in these institutions does not, by any means, disqualify young men for this purpose, it is only too apparent that these colleges are meant to satisfy the requirements of a special class. The higher education of Indian Princes and nobles has always been the cherished aim of Lord Curzon and his successors, and it must be admitted that these endeavours of Government, which cannot be too highly commended, have been fruitful of excellent results. The *jagirdars* and nobles of Bhopal were no better than others of their class in the adjoining parts of the country. After great deliberation and much consultation, I decided to open a separate school for the boys of higher classes, and in order to set a good example to them, I sent my own youngest son, Hamidulla Khan, to this institution, while on the military side I commissioned my second son Obaidulla Khan to be a prototype for others

similarly inclined. I was anxious to leave the school well-established when I started for the Hedjaz, so the necessary steps were taken as soon as things had been got ship-shape in the Education department. The new institution was named Alexandra Nobles' School after the Consort of His Imperial Majesty.

The plans of the new building were drawn up by Sir Swinton Jacob, the well known architect of Jeypore, after the model of the Sandeman Hall at Quetta. The foundation stone was laid on the 17th October 1903, and I invited a number of guests, my friend Major Impey among them, to witness the ceremony.

CHAPTER XIV

Pilgrimage to the Hedjaz

In the "Story of a pilgrimage to the Hedjaz" I have given a detailed account of the Haj. In this book therefore, I will content myself with a brief description. As my readers are aware I had, soon after my accession to the *masnad*, resolved to make the pilgrimage, and had deferred the accomplishment of that sacred purpose for a year on account of the Delhi Darbar. As soon as the Imperial Government had been informed of my intended departure, the necessary arrangements were taken in hand, and through the assistance of the British Government, all preparations were successfully made. The Ottoman Government undertook to afford me all facilities, and made itself responsible for the protection of my caravan. As Sahebzada Obaidulla Khan had expressed a desire to accompany me, I sent the following official communication to him.

"God willing, we shall soon start on a pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines. If you have definitely decided to accompany us, you should let us have a complete list of your party in order that the necessary provision for their travelling allowance be made. Dated the 27th Jamadiul Awwal 1321 A. H."

A complete set of instructions* was drawn up for the guidance of Nawab Nasrulla Khan in administrative matters during my absence. This was the first occasion in the history of the State for the Ruler to have delegated his powers to the Heir Apparent, and in order to make the experiment successful, it was necessary to help Nasrulla Khan with wise counsel.

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* These instructions are given below, and have been taken *verbatim* from "The Story of a Pilgrimage to the Hedjaz" pp. 131-136.

"Nawab Muhammad Nasrulla Khan sahib Bahadur will be guided by the instructions embodied in the following sections :—

(1) The system hitherto in vogue, of papers being submitted to the *Insha* office for our approval, information, or sanction shall continue as usual ; and the departmental intermediary and confirmatory orders endorsed thereon, will be issued under the signature of Nawab Muhammad Nasrulla Khan in so far as such orders are in accordance with the laws and procedure in force in the State.

(2) Orders issued under our signature regarding the appointment, dismissal, suspension, transfer, promotion and degradation of, and the grant of leave to State officials will, in cases of urgency, be issued under the signature of Nawab Muhammad Nasrulla Khan. Every such order will however, be provisional till our return, and, unless confirmed by our sanction, shall not be deemed to be permanent. On our return from the Hedjaz a statement of all such orders shall be submitted to us by the officer in charge of our pay office. Suitable orders will then be issued by us after due consideration. No annuity, pension, or allowance should be created, and no new increase in emoluments shall be made during our absence.

(3) Appeals lodged in the *Insha* office shall, in accordance with the existing procedure, be forwarded for disposal under orders from Nawab Muhammad Nasrulla Khan Bahadur, to the Nasirul Moham if they are preferred against the Moinul-Moham's decree or finding, or *vice versa*. By the time that orders have been passed on these appeals by the departmental heads concerned, we shall have returned from our voyage, and they will then be laid before us for final confirmation. As regards fresh appeals, we should be kept informed of them by post. It takes a letter one month to reach Mecca from India.

(4) Of the revenue, civil and criminal cases for appeal or revision, or cases in which capital sentence has been passed, and which are submitted to us through the *Insha* office for final confirmation—whether such cases belong to the class mentioned in the above section, or have been instituted and have passed through the preliminary stages previous to our departure—should any case be of such a nature that to leave it pending till our return

During the days of mourning I had made two wills, one in regard to private matters and the other bearing upon public affairs. The sudden death of Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk made upon my mind an indelible impression of the transitoriness of the world, and, indeed, human life is no more permanent than a bubble. What is this busy world but a huge caravanserai, and rightly guided are those who look upon life's pleasures here as childish amusements. Not the present, but the life hereafter is the be-all and end-all of our existence, for that is the

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would be injurious to the litigants or otherwise inexpedient, or should the case be one in which capital punishment has to be awarded, the matter may be finally dealt with by the Nawab Muhammad Nasrulla Khan sahib Bahadur in consultation with the following colleagues in accordance with the provisions below :—

(*a*) In revenue cases the Nasirul Moham and Munshi Muhammad Israr Hasan Khan sahib, Assistant to the Nasirul-Moham, will be consulted.

(*b*) In civil and criminal cases Khan Bahadur Munshi Muhammad Mumtaz Ali Khan sahib, Moinul Moham and Munshi Syed Muhammad Qudrat Ali sahib, Revenue Assistant, will be consulted.

(*c*) In cases involving capital punishment the following Committee will have consultative powers :—Khan Bahadur Munshi Muhammad Mumtaz Ali Khan, the Moinul Moham, the Nasirul Moham, Hafiz Muhammad Hasan Khan sahib Bahadur, *Mir Bakshi* of the State Forces, Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Haq sahib, the *Qazi*, and the Maulvi Muhammad Yahya sahib, the *Mufti* of the State.

Explanation :—All such decisions, with the exception of sentences of capital punishment, will be open to appeal to us within three months after our return. In cases in which the Committee referred to in clause (*c*) are unanimous in awarding a capital sentence, the award, prior to its enforcement, should be communicated to us by telegram. A telegraphic message takes three days to reach Mecca from India, and our decision will be telegraphed back within a week or ten days at the most. The sentence ordering the accused to be beheaded shall be announced, and the date on which it is to be executed, shall be fixed after our approval has been obtained.

(5) With regard to important police matters the Nasirul Moham will issue the necessary instructions after consulting Nawab Muhammad Nasrulla Khan sahib Bahadur.

(6) Should it be necessary to send out a military detachment for the pursuit, arrest,or suppression of robbers, dacoaits or other similar depredators, Nawab Muhammad Nasrulla Khan sahib Bahadur will pass orders in

teaching of our Holy Quran. The whirligig of time, the catastrophic changes, the rise and fall of nations, everything, indeed, has a lesson for him who has the eyes to see and the ears to hear. Is it not, therefore, the way of wisdom to read the writing on the wall, and be prepared for the end? "He who dies," says the Holy Prophet—hallowed be his name—"without making a will, is, in the next life, like unto a man who is mute." Copies of my will relating to public matters were, before my departure for Mecca, given to my sons and the *Qazi* and the *Mufti* of the State, and the other will was entrusted to a confidential servant who was instructed to hand it over to Nawab Nasrulla Khan in the event of my death.

The Government of India honoured me by deputing Major McWatt, I.M.S., to accompany me as far as Jedda. Concessions were extended to me in the matter of quarantine regulations also, and instead of undergoing at Bombay the quarantine detention necessary under International Law, I was permitted to go into quarantine at Bhopal itself, and, later

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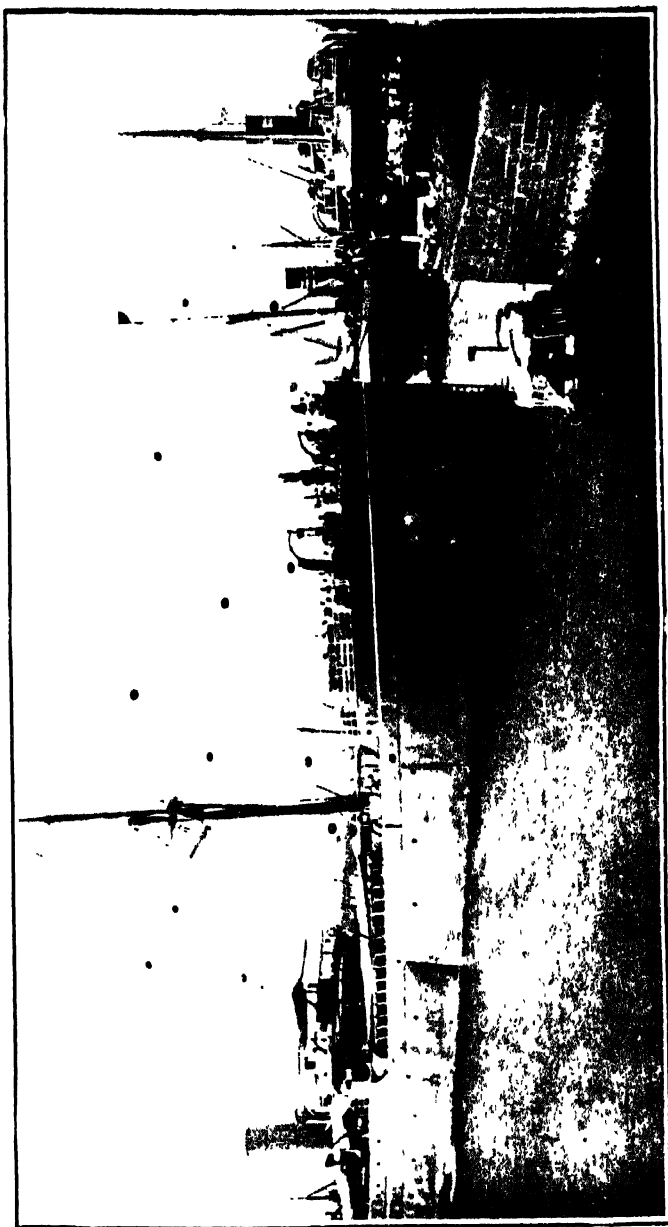
conjunction and consultation with Nusrat Jang Bahadur, the Military *Mir Bakhshi*, the Moinul Moham Bahadur, and the Nasirul Moham Bahadur.

(7) Nawab Muhammad Nasrulla Khan sahib Bahadur has power to draw upon the State treasury to the amount of Rs. 2,000 a month to meet extraordinary charges that may have to be incurred in connection with the public works or for the public advantage.

(8) In the event of its being found necessary to institute an inquiry into the conduct of any State official, the Nasirul Moham will apply for permission to investigate as required by the practice obtaining in the State. Nawab Muhammad Nasrulla Khan will pass orders accordingly; provided however, that no order against any official whose monthly pay exceeds Rs. 25 shall take effect during our absence without our express permission. Should such a contingency arise, the official concerned shall remain on security and await either our return, when his case will be looked into by us, or our order confirming the award against him.

on, at Bu Said instead of in the Kamran island. I had sent several representatives to Bombay to charter a special steamer for my party, but on hearing from them that the arrangement was a very difficult one to make, and that the shipping companies were not willing to open negotiations for anything less than a lakh of rupees, I approached the Government of India in the matter. The Government deputed Major Impey to make the necessary arrangements. Through the assistance of Captain Goodrich of the Indian Marine, who was connected with Bombay dockyards and knew all the ships in the harbour, Major Impey succeeded in engaging an excellent steamer at a moderate cost. He saw me on his return from Bombay, and in the course of conversation said "Your Highness will be glad to know that the name of the steamer is "Akbar", and it is a happy coincidence that you will be going in the "Akbar" to the house of Allah-O-Akbar." 'Yes,' I answered, 'It is, undoubtedly, a happy omen, and Insha-allah, I will have the good fortune of taking part in a Haj-i-Akbar on arrival in the Hedjaz." Haj-i-Akbar literally means the grand pilgrimage, and should the day of the Haj be a Friday, the pilgrim is considered to have performed the Haj-i-Akbar. Such a Haj is regarded by Mussalmans as specially auspicious and meritorious.

Ever since I assumed the conduct of State affairs, I have, so far as in me lay, done nothing which I had not carefully considered, and have, all along, been animated by the single-minded desire of doing good to my people. And just as one is greatly concerned at the illness of one's nearest and dearest,

THE STEAMSHIP "AKBAR."

so does the sight of a *malaise* running through my people, or of any discomfort or trouble disturbing their minds, make me profoundly anxious. But personal rule imposes tremendous responsibilities on the ruler, as compared with a constitutional government, which provides for bodies of representative opinion sharing the responsibility of government with the Crown. Being liable to err like all human beings, I considered it imperative, before starting for the Holy Land, to seek my people's forgiveness of my faults and shortcomings. On the 24th of Rajab, therefore, I addressed the chosen representatives of the people in the Asafia Mosque, and begged everybody to forgive me. Officials of the State were also present on the occasion, and to them I emphasized the need of kindness and justice. The scene in the mosque at that time, when the people, in faltering voice and tears coursing down their cheeks, approached me and said "we too beseech you to grant us forgiveness", was very touching. As it was impossible for all my subjects to gather together in one place, I had my appeal to the people published and distributed broadcast in my territory.

Two quarantine camps were established, one for myself and my personal attendants in the Hayat Afza and Nishat Afza gardens, and the other for the rest of my caravan at Dip, about 12 miles away. My own quarantine camp I entered on the 27th Rajab with a hundred followers. On the 6th of Shaaban (corresponding with the 28th October) I left Bhopal by special train, which was thoroughly disinfected beforehand and brought alongside the garden where I

was staying. At Dip station, carriages containing the rest of the party were attached to my train. Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Major Impey, who had preceded me a day earlier, met me at Bombay and a Secretary of the Bombay Government, Captain Goodrich and a few other European and Indian friends were also present. A guard of honour was mounted on the station platform, and a salute was fired as I alighted from my saloon.

The steamer *Akbar* was moored alongside the quay and I went on board immediately. At 12 noon she moved into the roadsteads of the harbour, and a few hours later weighed anchor and set sail. I could see for a considerable time Nasrulla Khan's figure on the fast receding shore, gazing at our ship, and then gradually disappearing into what was soon an indefinable brown line on the horizon. "*Bismillah Majriha-O-Mursaha*" were the words on the lips of everyone of us, words, with which according to the Holy Quran, the voyage of Noah's Ark began.

Birjis Jahan was only five months old at the time, and we had to leave her behind. Nawab Nasrulla Khan, Munshi Mumtaz Ali Khan, Moulvi Nasiruddin, Munshi Israr Hasan Khan and the Lady doctor were all asked to look after her and keep me informed of the state of her health. I was particularly fond of Birjis, and keenly felt her separation from me, all the more because of the feelings of Obaidulla Khan and Shahryar Dulhan who were leaving their dear child behind in order to accompany me. This was my first experience of the sea, and although Obaidulla Khan and a number of my party complained of sea-sickness, I kept well, by God's grace, and never even

suffered from headache. On the 21st Shaaban (November 12th) the ship dropped anchor at Bu Said harbour close to Jedda. Mr. Devey, the British Counsel, came on board to see me, and said that on account of the absence of any sickness on our ship, a telegram had been sent to the Sublime Porte asking for exemption for myself and party from all quarantine regulations. For the Porte's reply we had to wait full seven days, and as soon as it was received, Mr. Devey informed Major McWatt and we were very glad to know that we had been exempted from all irksome regulations. Soon after this Ali Yamni Bey, Governor of Jedda, accompanied by his assistant Faik Bey, and the Medical and Military officers of his suite, visited me on board the ship. At the interviews the British Vice-Consul at Jedda acted as interpreter. The Governor after having with great politeness and courtesy inquired after my health, said that His Majesty the Sultan had sent urgent orders for adequate arrangements being made for my protection, and that 700 Turkish troops with 2 guns had been detailed as my escort in fulfilment of His Majesty's commands. The troops, he added, had already left Medina, but as their arrival at Yembo had been timed to suit my departure inland after compliance with the quarantine regulations, I would, now that the ship had been exempted from the operation of these regulations by royal *farman*, arrive at Yembo earlier than the troops. He, therefore, proposed to detail troops for escort duty from the garrisons at Jedda and Yembo.

Obaidulla Khan and Hamidulla Khan returned

the Governor's visit on my behalf, and the next day 50 men of my party were sent ashore to proceed to Mecca straightaway. On the 29th Shaaban (November 2nd) we left for Yembo by sea and arrived there at 12 noon the next day. Mustafa Effendi, Governor of Yembo, received me on the seashore, a salute was fired, and a guard of honour furnished by Turkish troops presented arms. The march past of the entire Turkish garrison was then witnessed by me from a balcony, and when the ceremony was over, Major McWatt made a speech in which he said that the arrangements made by the Turkish Government for my comfort and security, would contribute to the cordiality and strength of the friendly relations existing between the Sublime Porte and the British Government. The Turkish Commander, in reply, gave expression to the determination of the troops under his command to discharge their responsibility worthily and well.

On the 7th Ramazan my caravan started for the holy city, and Major and Mrs. McWatt left for Jedda. The Turkish Commandant, at the time of our departure for Medina, addressed his troops thus: "My children, Her Highness the Begam of Bhopal is a Mussalman, and has set foot on our soil to perform the holy pilgrimage. It is your religious duty, therefore, to protect her from all danger, and carry out her behests. In discharging that task you will be fulfilling a dear wish, nay, an urgent command of your Sultan. Remember that the slightest deviation from the path of duty will be visited with the dis-

pleasure of your royal Master, and will bring discredit on your race."

My palanquin was guarded by a small escort of my own troops, while the Turkish troops constituted the outer ring, and surrounded the whole cara van. Every five minutes Turkish bugles rang out orders to the whole escort, and as soon as we halted anywhere for the night, the Turks formed a cordon round the whole camp, on the fringe of which at every ten yards stood a sentinel, his back to the camp, a bandolier full of cartridges about his waist, and a loaded carbine on his shoulder. At nine o'clock after sundown a gun was fired, and all ingress and egress were stopped.

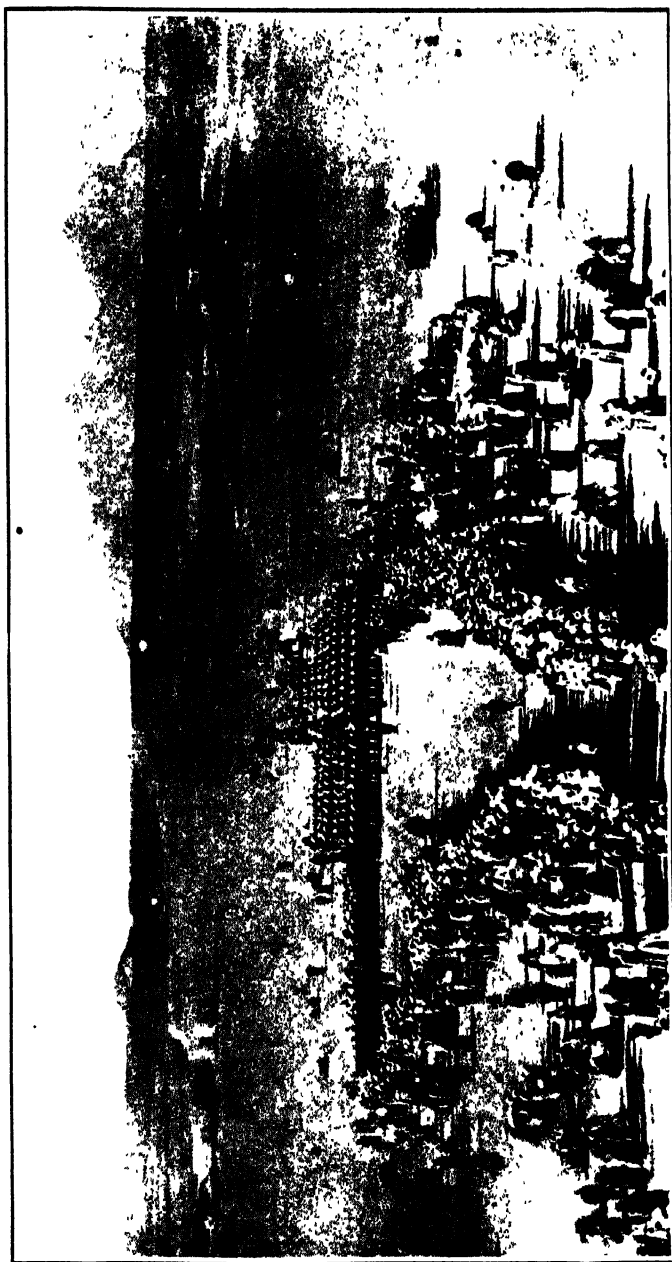
On the 9th Ramzan at Hamra, shots rang out and bullets whizzed past. A few Bedouins, cleverly concealed in the hills near by, had fired on us, and soon afterwards a message was received from them warning us of a hot reception at their hands if their anger was not immediately appeased by a liberal supply of money. Obaidulla Khan rode up to me to ascertain my wishes. I was not disposed to close the door at once to negotiations, but my son's manly courage revolted at the thought of the slightest weakness, and he immediately consulted Hilmi Effendi, the Commandant of the Turkish escort. "Not a pice ought to be given" said the latter, and immediately gave orders for elaborate precautions being taken. We passed the night in considerable anxiety, but, by God's grace, the Bedouins could not muster up the courage to molest us. We were now passing through hilly country and as the rocks and crags afforded shelter to the bandits,

the Turkish Commander, on the following morning, altered his dispositions, and a strong detachment was detailed for duty near my palanquin to ensure my safety. The advance guard provided a number of scouting parties who would scale the hills commanding our route, and signal to the main body that the way was clear. At Haifa a few Bedouins were located on the hills, and as soon as danger was signalled to us by the Turkish scouts, we were subjected to sniping. Obaidulla Khan had a narrow escape, and several bullets flew past my own palanquin. The Turks lost no time and, with great gallantry, rushed the hill at once. The Bedouins fled, and "No danger" was soon signalled to us. I sent for Hilmi Effendi, and complimenting him on the valour of his soldiers, asked him to convey my thankfulness to His Majesty the Sultan for having graciously ordered adequate steps being taken for my safety. " You are our honoured guest ", he answered, " and a friend and ally of the British Government. Your protection is a duty enjoined on us by our royal Master. Look upon me as your slave, and on my soldiers as your children. We will serve you just as your own troops do in India."

On the 11th Ramzan we were met by a detachment of 300 Turkish troops and a few guns under a Military officer from Medina. A salute of 21 guns was fired as my palanquin approached the encampment, and after *Isha* prayers we halted at Bir-darwesh for the night. On our arrival at Bir Ali the following day, we learnt that a glimpse of the Holy City could be obtained from the hill tops. Most of my party went up the hill at once, impelled by the

eagerness to view the city, the very dust of which is so sacred to a Mussalman. Great was their delight when the valley burst into view, and, strange to say, a mysterious mild perfume seemed to pervade the atmosphere in a way which could not be accounted for. It was a perfume which not only pleased our sense of smell, but delighted and refreshed the inmost soul. Leaving Bir Ali behind, we were soon in sight of the Prophet's city. All sense of the discomforts we had experienced vanished like the stars at sunrise, and as the camel plodded along, silence seemed to settle on me, awakening indescribable emotion. It was impossible to restrain oneself any longer in the awe and majesty of that panorama, and the words of the holy formula "May God shower his choicest blessings on the Prophet and his descendants" escaped my lips.

At 9 in the night we halted at Bir Arwa, which is only two miles from Medina. The leading citizens received us here, but Obaidulla Khan, unable to restrain himself, went on to the Holy Shrine to pay his respects and returned after about four hours. The next morning the son-in-law of Shaikhul Harem, the Guardian of the Holy Shrine, visited me. In the course of conversation he said that His Imperial Majesty the Sultan had sent urgent orders for everything possible being done for my comfort, and had repeatedly inquired after my health and safety. I made my formal entry into the town at 9 A. M. with the Turkish Band playing military tunes and the escort in attendance. Just outside Bab-i-Ambaria, Izzat-lau Hassan Muzaffar Pasha, Governor of Medina and Treasurer of the Holy Shrine, received

me under a military salute, and presented the notabilities of the town to me. In my speech on this occasion I expressed my profound gratefulness to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan for the gracious kindness and courtesy he had extended to me, and for the measures taken by His Majesty's Government for my protection. I particularly complimented the Turkish troops on their gallantry and steadiness and thanked the officers for the energy and keenness they had displayed in the performance of their duties throughout my journey. I then entered the Holy Precincts, and having paid my respects at the sacred gateway, returned to the house prepared by the authorities for my stay. This house was at a considerable distance from the Prophet's mosque, so another residence was rented near the Harem through the assistance of Osman Pasha, the Guardian of the Holy Shrine. I used to attend the Harem every day after the evening prayers, and the Shaikh had kindly reserved a small enclosure for my use. During my stay at Medina I had opportunities of meeting Turkish ladies of the higher classes at the dinners and other functions held in my honour, and I found that in the houses of the nobles and other important personages, meals were usually served after the European style. I bought a number of Arabian horses of the purest breeds of Najd and other places in the interior of the country. At Medina I decided to make the journey to Mecca by the Sultani overland route, instead of by the way of Yembo and Jedda. The Shaikhul Harem, too, preferred this route, and telegrams were, therefore, despatched to Constantinople to inform His Majes-

TURKISH TROOPS AT MEDINA, AT THE CONGREGATION FOR ID PRAYERS.

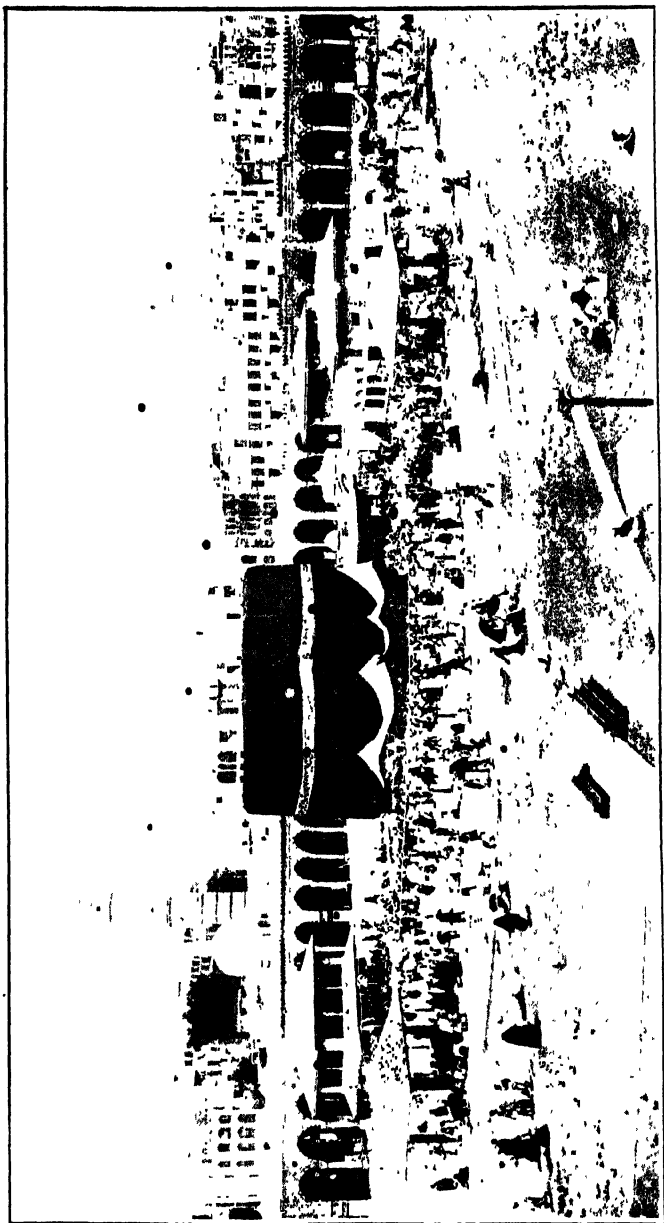
ty the Sultan of the alteration in my plans. The Sultan, immediately, telegraphed instructions to Abdur Rehman Pasha, Warder of the Holy Mehmel, and made the latter responsible for my safety. A number of Bedouin Sardars having written letters in which dire possibilities were threatened if their demands for money were not immediately satisfied, the Turkish authorities provided a very strong escort for me. On the 16th Ziqadh I divided my party into two portions, one of which departed for Mecca by the way of Yembo, and the other accompanied me by the overland route.

The following day we set out from Medina with the Syrian caravan, and arrived at Bir Ali at about 8 in the morning. We had all put on the sacred pilgrim dress before we left Medina. Abdur Rehman Pasha treated me with the greatest kindness, and took every possible precaution for my safety. He vacated his own tent for my use and had another pitched for himself, and since he considered the arrangement necessary for reasons of my safety, I accepted the suggestion although I had at first politely declined owing to myself and my party being well-equipped with tents. The Bedouins, we knew, were on the war-path, and every night the most elaborate precautions were taken. Three stages of our journey we passed in comfort, but on the fourth stage between Khals and Bir Hassan our caravan was greeted with a volley of bullets from the hill tops. My Turkish escort immediately opened fire. The guns rapidly came into action, and dropped shells on the wall of rock which screened the Bedouins. The action lasted about a couple of hours

and came to an end with the Turkish soldiers storming the hills. To my extreme regret a Turkish Captain, Yuzbashi Sulaiman Agha, fell mortally wounded while gallantly leading his men. Abdur Rehman Pasha had taken another very wise precaution; he had put me in his own palanquin which went almost unattended at the head of the caravan, while my own palanquin in the centre, which had attracted the fire of the Bedouins, was empty.

We entered Mecca on the 6th of Zilhaj, and were met outside the town by His Excellency Ahmad Ratib Pasha, the Vali, and His Highness Aunur Rafiq Pasha, the Grand Sharif. A Turkish guard of honour presented arms, and a salute was fired. Obaidulla Khan called on the highest dignitaries the next day on my behalf, and during my stay at the Holy City, Abdur Rehman Pasha, Ahmad Ratib Pasha, Shaikh Mohammad Saleh Shaibi (the Keeper of the Holy Key) and others made ceremonious calls at my residence. I paid return visits to the Governor of the Hedjaz and the Grand Sharif.

A number of letters from Bhopal were delivered to us at Mecca, and the news of all being well at home relieved our anxiety. On the 8th Zilhaj we left for Arafat and the next day performed the rites of the Haj. We returned to Mecca on the 12th after having rendered the ritual sacrifices. I will not refer to the various details of the Haj in this place, for a complete description of them will be found in the Story of a Pilgrimage to the Hedjaz."

The outstanding feature of Islam is the belief in the Unity of God. This is the belief which has

THE HOLY HAREM AT MECCA.

been proclaimed by all Prophets—peace and Allah's benedictions upon them, and Islam most strictly enjoins upon its followers an absolute belief in the revelation of all Prophets. The Islamic faith is intimately connected with the great Prophet Abraham —hallowed be his name—and, because of this intimate relationship, our religion has been frequently called "the way of Abraham." The story is related in the Quran of how the latter's mind essayed to solve the mystery of the Universe, how he first looked in speechless amazement upon the stars, then the moon and lastly the sun, his mind wandering from the one to the other, stunned and stupefied, and how, when they all, after shining brightly for a while, sank and disappeared, light came to him from within, guiding him aright, and how with the truth gradually dawning upon him, he burst forth in ecstatic delight into a praise of the Almighty, the one and only God, the Omnipotent, the Omniscient and the All-Merciful: "Verily towards Him I turn, He who has created all that is above, and all that is underneath, and I am not one of those who seeing, believe not." This Unity of Godhead was the key to the whole mystery, and having discovered the great secret, the seer sallied forth to proclaim the revelation to the world at large, and teach mankind the right mode of Divine worship.

It was the Prophet Abraham who rebuilt the house of Caabah, on the foundations laid by Adam, and created the traditions of the great pilgrimage which have been upheld throughout past centuries down to the present day. Our own Prophet, who was born early in the seventh century of the Chris-

tian era, was a direct descendant of the Prophet Abraham in the seventh generation, and guided by the revelation which came to him, as it did to his great ancestor before him, he confirmed and set the seal upon the rites of the Haj, and made them obligatory for all believers. Throughout the ritual the traditions of the Prophet Abraham are strictly followed. Even the pilgrim's dress is the same as was worn by the great Prophet, and at the Haj men of all classes, of different climes, and of various races, all with a couple of sheets wrapped, shroud like, round their bodies, present a truly wonderful spectacle. The various rites of the Haj, considered in the light of what they are intended to represent, and the events which befel the Prophet Abraham, his wife Hazrat Hajra, and his son Hazrat Ismail—God's blessings upon all of them—bring home to the pilgrim the lesson of absolute trust in the Almighty, of perseverance in God's way, and of obedience to God's will. Apart from that, the very fact of people gathering together in one place from all parts of the world, united in faith but divided in everything else, in language, in temperament, in manners, in their ways of thought—all wearing the same dress without distinction of class or caste, and bending their knees in a common form of worship on ground rich with solemn suggestions, and hallowed and sanctified by the feet of the best and greatest of all mankind, cannot but have a profound spiritual effect on the pilgrim, an effect which it would be impossible with a thousand sermons full of wise words to produce.

On the 22nd Zilhaj we set out on the return jour-

MOUNT ARAFAT ON THE DAY OF THE HAJ.

ney. His Excellency Ahmad Ratib Pasha made adequate arrangements for the protection of my caravan, and we reached Jedda safely the following day. The steamship *Akbar* was awaiting our arrival, and with my sons and daughter-in-law I immediately went on board. Before leaving for India I telegraphed to His Excellency Ahmad Ratib Pasha, the Grand Sharif and Abdur Rehman Pasha, through the British Consulate, to inform them of my safe arrival at Jedda, and thank them all for the courtesy and kindness they had extended to me. As the Khedive of Egypt had kindly interested himself in the provisional arrangements made for my journey from Medina to Mecca, I telegraphed to His Highness at Cairo, and expressed my cordial gratefulness to him.

On the 7th Moharram the *Akbar* entered Bombay harbour, and it was a great pleasure to me to see Major Impey and Nawab Nasrulla Khan who came on board, and brought Birjis Jahan also. Birjis was looking very fit and well, and all the anxiety, which I had felt about her, vanished as soon as I saw her looking the very picture of health, and brimming over with delight. Major Impey had frequently seen Birjis Jahan during my absence, and it was obvious that she had been very well looked after all these months. Nawab Nasrulla Khan spent the night with us on board the ship, and the three brothers and myself sat talking in my cabin for a long time. All of us went ashore the next day. A guard of honour, drawn up on the quay, presented arms when I landed, and a salute was fired by the fort battery. I stayed in Bombay for a few days

with about 40 followers, and the rest of my party were sent on to Bhopal by special train. Nawab Nasrulla Khan had rented a suitable house for my use at Bombay, and, in the course of my stay, I visited several Girls' schools, weaving and spinning works, and other interesting institutions. I also made the acquaintance of His Highness the Gaekwar at this time.

Leaving Bombay on the 16th Moharram I arrived at Bhopal the following afternoon. The leading nobles and officials met me at the station and I made a State entry into the town. Nawab Nasrulla Khan had taken great pains over the arrangements for my reception. A series of triumphal arches had been prepared, the route was gay with flags and bunting, and the Sadar Manzil and other palaces were all a blaze of colour. Escorted by my troops and with elephants bearing the *mahi-maratib* at the head of the cavalcade, my carriage entered the palace square, and there was no mistaking the enthusiasm of the hundreds who lined my route and crowded the housetops. Magnificent illuminations brought the evening to a close, and the long rows of lights spoke of the cordiality of my people's welcome. The next day Nawab Nasrulla Khan held a great feast in our honour, and on the 27th Moharram the sacred relics from the Holy Places were brought in procession from the station. Thus concluded the pilgrimage. I had been away five months and ten days, and had discharged a tremendous responsibility laid on me by my religion. " O God, accept it from me, for Thou hearest and knowest everything."

CHAPTER XV

The birth of Habibulla Khan—Some ceremonies —Education of my youngest Son—My Taste for Art

On the 2nd December, 1903, the day on which I reached Medina, a son was born to Nawab Nasrulla Khan at Bhopal. A salute of 5 guns was fired from the Fatehgarh fort, and, as is the custom on such occasions, the troops assembled before the palace to fire volleys in expression of joy, and the dignitaries of the State presented themselves to offer congratulations. A telegram was immediately sent to me at Medina informing me of the birth of my grandson, and asking me to suggest a name for the newborn. The telegram was forwarded to me by the British Consul at Jedda, and took about 10 days to reach me.

It is impossible to transcribe on paper the feelings awakened in a Mussalman by a visit to the city of the Holy Prophet—Peace, and God's benedictions upon him. The effect of those feelings on me was considerably enhanced when I learnt in that sacred place of the birth of my grandson. I gave orders immediately for a number of trays full of dates and almonds being sent to the Harem, and quietly and earnestly prayed for the little one's long life and prosperity.

Both Obaidulla and Hamidulla were delighted to hear of the birth of their nephew, and we all sent

congratulatory telegrams to Nawab Nasrulla Khan at Bhopal. The next day the whole of my retinue presented themselves to offer congratulations. In such holy surroundings I could not think of a better name for the new arrival than 'Mohammad Habibullah Khan' since our Prophet was known as "Habibullah" (the Friend of God). The name was immediately telegraphed to Bhopal as given by me to my grandchild.

The *aqiqa* ceremony was performed by Mian Wilayat Ali Khan, the maternal grandfather of the child, and all other ceremonies were postponed till my return from the pilgrimage. It being essential at the *aqiqa* to give a name to the child, he was for the time being named Abdullah, but as soon as my telegram, which took about a week to reach Bhopal, arrived, the child was given the name I had chosen for him.

I saw Habibulla for the first time on the 17th Moharram on my return from the pilgrimage. How sweet are the pleasures of one's home! I rendered thanks to the Almighty for having given me a grandson as well as a granddaughter, for I am the first Begam of Bhopal to have been blessed with male issue. One's children are "the ornaments of worldly life", and, in the words of the Prophet Hazrat Sulaiman, Peace and God's blessings upon him, I always pray "Grant me, O God, the grace of rendering thanks to Thee for the favours with which Thou hast blessed me and my parents, and O Lord, vouchsafe me the grace of such virtuous deeds as would please Thee. Bless my offspring, O Lord, with piety and virtue: Thy forgiveness I seek and am one of those who believe.'

The nobles and officials came to offer congratulations on the double happiness of the accomplishment of the Haj and the birth of my grandson. In regard to the presentation of *joras* the ceremonies were observed on the same scale as at the birth of Birjis Jahan. On the 17th Rabiul Awwal, Obaidulla presented *joras* in the same way as Nasrulla Khan did for his niece. The *aqiqa* banquet was held on the 12th, and on the 18th *joras* were presented on behalf of Hamidulla Khan and myself, the standard of the ceremonies being precisely the same as that observed on the birth of Birjis.

During my mother's reign I had, as Heir Apparent, little to do with the work of administration, and a considerable part of my leisure was devoted to the supervision of my children's education. I never left any child of mine entirely to the nurses and ayahs, for Mussulman servant-girls, who could be absolutely trusted, are almost impossible to obtain. In accordance with the custom followed in Mussulman families, Hamidulla Khan's education began when he was four years four months and four days old, and as is usual on such occasions, sweetmeats and presents were distributed to the servants of my *jagir*. Both Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk and I were of the opinion that the new system of education should be combined with the old, but teachers who could accomplish that happy combination, could not be found. We, therefore, had to keep a watchful eye on the progress of our youngest boy's education, as we had done on that of his elder brothers. Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk always took the greatest interest in the upbringing of his sons, and though not a Hafiz himself,

he had taught the Holy Quran to Obaidulla Khan. Hamidulla received his first lessons in the "Qaida-i-Baghdadi" and in the doctrines and principles of Islam from his father. To his moral training which is the foundation of all character, we attached the greatest importance. In about a year's time he finished his Urdu Primer and a few *suras* of the Holy Quran. Up till then I supervised his daily lessons, but as his knowledge and range of vision increased, it became very necessary to appoint a tutor. For this purpose I selected the late Moulvi* Mohammad Husain, who was a pious man and had been the tutor of Obaidulla Khan for three years. He had an admirable way of teaching Persian, and with his assistance Hamidulla made excellent progress. After my accession Hamidulla began his lessons in English with Pandit Deo Dutt, and by the time of Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk's death had nearly finished the Holy Quran. It was now imperatively necessary that his education should proceed on more systematic lines, so Munshi Liakat Ali, M.A., a graduate of the Allahabad University, was appointed to take charge of his education. Riding and shooting were Hamidulla's favourite pastimes in his leisure hours, and his elder brothers were capable instructors in that line. In theology he was taught the Quran with Urdu translation, and that was quite sufficient to cultivate his mind and teach him the everlasting precepts of our faith. At first I used to teach him the translation of the Holy Quran myself, but as the cares of State became more exacting, I entrusted

* Father of Khan Bahadur Abdur Raoof Khan, Home Secretary, Bhopal State.

HAMIDULLA KHAN, AGED 7 YEARS

that work to Moulvi Abdul Kareem. Once again I took up that work for a short time in the course of my pilgrimage to the Hedjaz.

I found after some time that Hamidulla's progress in English was rather slow, and while considering over the matter, I received a *kharita* from the Viceroy consulting me on matters connected with the education of the sons of Ruling Princes. This led me to think of sending Hamidulla to one of the Chiefs' Colleges in India, but at that time the future of the Daly College at Indore was very uncertain, and ways and means were being considered for re-organising the institution, and placing it on a more stable basis. My desire, moreover, to popularise education in my own State made it necessary that a son of mine should be here on the spot to set an example to others, particularly to the boys of the higher classes. I, therefore, sought the advice of certain European friends and asked them to suggest an Englishman for the tutorship of Hamidulla Khan. In response to my request Major Manners Smith, the Political Agent in Bhopal, suggested the name of Mr. C. H. Payne, an M. A. of Oxford, who was invited to Bhopal and appointed Tutor.

I have a taste for art ever since my childhood. In my early age I found scope for this taste in executing ornamental needlework of various kinds, and particularly embroidery. My cares and responsibilities, however, left me little leisure later on for artistic pursuits. Mrs. McWatt who accompanied me as far as Jedda when I went to the Hedjaz, was an excellent painter, and in the course of the voyage, she painted a few sketches for me in water-colour, and from

her I received my first lessons in the art of painting. My first sketches were made on board the ship and by the time I reached Arabia, I had acquired a considerable knowledge of the art. At Medina I did a picture of the town and the hills overlooking it in water colour, and later on the harbour of Aden and other beautiful bits of scenery appealed to me. My first attempts were bound to be rather crude, but on my return to Bombay I devoted myself to the art with great energy, and my visits to the Museum, the School of Art, and similar other institutions more fully developed my capabilities. To my great regret I could not find a suitable European lady at Bombay who could accompany me to Bhopal to assist me in the cultivation of this taste. Miss Dhan Bai, a capable Parsee lady, however, accompanied me, and lived at Bhopal as my guest for some time. She helped me greatly in my practice, and, after some time, I was quite able to finish a picture without her guidance.

GARDEN VIEW, RAHAT MANZIL. (SKETCH BY H. H. THE BEGAM.)

CHAPTER XVI

The Third Year—Meeting with Lord Curzon—Introduction of Reforms—Conferment of G.C.I.E.—Appointment of Obaidulla Khan as Colonel-in-Chief, Bhopal Imperial Service Lancers

I had hitherto had no opportunity of meeting the Viceroy, so, as soon as I learnt that Lord Curzon would be passing through Bhopal on his way to Bombay, I telegraphed and arranged for an interview with His Excellency at Bhopal station. The station premises were elaborately decorated with flags and bunting, and the entire platform was carpeted. The State flag was hoisted near my waiting room and the Imperial Service Troops, the State Infantry and the Band were in attendance. All my sons, both the Ministers and their assistants were present. The Viceregal train arrived at Bhopal at 3 p.m. punctually, and His Excellency's saloon was drawn up in front of my waiting room. The guard of honour presented arms, and a royal salute was fired as His Excellency alighted, and shook hands with me. Lord Curzon immediately recognised Hamidulla and remarked "This is my page." His Excellency then accompanied me to the waiting room, and after about half an hour's conversation, returned to his train and left for Bombay. We talked most of the time about the Haj and the incidents of my sojourn in Arabia.

In the third year the five years' settlement was completed, and remissions totalling Rs. 5,55,473 were granted to the *mustajirs*. Various reforms were introduced in the Police department, and the number of constables was increased in the *mofussil*. Two companies of State Irregulars, which had been detailed for service with the State Police to assist in the suppression of crime in the districts, were permanently amalgamated with the Police Force. This raised the sanctioned strength of the Police to 2,200 of all ranks, and necessitated an increase in the new year's budget estimates. Rs. 30,000 were sanctioned for the construction of police stations. The reforms produced excellent results, and the year's record was highly gratifying both in regard to the decrease of crime and the percentage of convictions obtained.

The administration of the Forest department, unfortunately, did not show any improvement, and the annual income fell considerably short of the actual expenditure.

Nawab Sikander Begam had established the institution known as Victoria Girls' School. Miss Beers, a European lady, was the Superintendent, and was assisted by Miss Tara Bai, an Indian lady. Needlework and embroidery were taught at the school with other things. After my grandmother's death, my mother Nawab Shah Jahan Begum opened an Orphanage school which she named after my daughter Bilqis. Later on during the days of absolute Prime Ministers both the Victoria and Bilqisia schools shared the fate of other educational institution, and at my first visit to these schools

GARDEN VIEW, AHMEDABAD (SKETCH BY H. H. THE BEGAM.)

I found that the number of pupils was less than that of the staff. I, therefore, devoted myself, heart and soul, to the revival of the prosperity of these schools.

Plague again made its unwelcome appearance, and, in the light of the experience gained at the first outbreak, all due precautions were immediately taken, and the necessary sanitary measures adopted. Disinfection of houses and inoculation seemed to be more popular. Adequate steps to prevent the spread of the scourge were taken by the Municipality under the guidance of Nawab Nasrulla Khan, who looked after the needs of the people with great tact and diligence. I was away in Arabia when the epidemic appeared, and, in my absence, Nasrulla Khan and Colonel Weir had themselves inoculated in order to encourage others to follow their example.

Grass of excellent quality grows in the State, but no attention had hitherto been paid to the development of local resources in this respect. I deputed two men to Ambala Cantonment to acquire the necessary training in grass-farming, and gave orders for grass farms being opened in the State.

I have already mentioned that the Military department needed to be reorganized. The Cavalry known as the *Surkh Wardi* was split into two parts: one was organized under the name of Risala Ehtramia, and the other, called Intezamia, was created a distinct unit. A large sum of money was spent on their uniforms and the pay of the sowars was increased.

A new boiler was urgently required for the engine

at the waterworks, and my officials were almost unanimously of the opinion that a water tax should be levied to defray the cost. Mr. Cook, the Engineer, who had spent nearly forty years in the service of the State, and well knew my financial difficulties, had also urged the imposition of a water tax on the ground that similar taxes were levied elsewhere in the country. I could not see my way to accept the porposal, and gave orders for the State funds to bear the cost, which amounted to thirty-five thousand rupees.

For the repairs of roads and dâk bungalows in the districts, the budgetted allotment was increased by about thirty-two thousand rupees.

The experience of the last two years had brought home to me the necessity of reorganizing the various State offices, at most of which the quality as well as the quantity of the work left much to be desired. The efficiency of the Audit and Accounts office being most essential to administration, steps were taken, under my personal guidance, to improve the organisation of this office.

The rate of the exchange of local copper coins was always fluctuating, and this caused great inconvenience and hardship both to the poor and the trading classes. To remove this evil a stable rate of exchange was introduced.

The work of the Judicial department, though more satisfactory than that of the other departments of the State, was yet not all that it should have been, for the people generally had not that confidence in the courts which is a *sine quâ non* of good government. It was, therefore, very important that

I should give my personal attention to the work of this department, and hear the appeals against the judgment of the Ministers. This inspired general confidence, for while the public were, on the one hand, assured of absolute justice being done, the lower courts, on the other, began to exercise greater care in the performance of their responsible duties. It is impossible to please both the plaintiff and the defendant; but even-handed justice has a strange way of winning confidence and appealing to everybody's heart. Knowing well what stress Islam lays on justice being done to the people, I have always considered it incumbent on me to exercise my personal supervision over the work of this department.

Matters connected with the Islamic law are referred by the courts to the *Qázi* and the *Mufti* of the State, but a great difficulty sometimes arose in case of a difference of opinion between these two interpreters of the Muslim law. At a cost of about twelve thousand rupees per annum, I established a Majlis of Ulema to whom all points of difference between the *Qázi* and the *Mufti* are referred.

My pilgrimage to the Hedjaz occupied a great part of the year, but the amount of State work, which called for my personal attention, can be judged from the fact that the number of papers on which I passed orders was 31,213.

This year on the occasion of his birthday, His Imperial Majesty the King-Emperor honoured me with the title of G.C.I.E., (Knight Grand Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire), and a notification to that effect appeared in the

Gazette of India Extraordinary, dated the 24th June 1904. His Excellency Lord Curzon conveyed his congratulations to me in a telegram to which I sent the following reply :—

"Most heartily I thank Your Excellency for your kind congratulations, and shall be most grateful if my respectful thanks will be conveyed to His Imperial Majesty the King-Emperor, who has graciously conferred this honour upon me. I shall always highly value this distinction."

I received a number of congratulatory letters and telegrams from my European and Indian friends on this occasion, and particularly appreciated those received from Mr. Dane, the Foreign Secretary, General Beatson, the Inspector General of Imperial Service Troops, Major Daly, the Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, Major Manners Smith, the Political Agent in Bhopal, His Highness the Maharaja Scindia, the Nawab of Loharu, Colonel Barr, Resident in Hyderabad, Mr. Robertson, Resident in Mysore, Major Meade, Resident in Baroda, Mr. John Lang, Colonel Weir, the Agency Surgeon, and Major McWatt who wrote to me from England.

In my elder sons I saw from their early age a sort of natural inclination for a military career. This was a result of the traditions of their race, and of the training they received from their father who was a living embodiment of these traditions. Nawab Nasrulla Khan being the Heir Apparent, I considered it very important that he should be quite capable to deal with the civil side of the administration. In regard to Obaidulla Khan I was of the opinion

that he should join the Imperial Cadet Corps, and though Colonel Meade too heartily agreed, I could not, owing to certain difficulties, carry out my intention.

On my return from the pilgrimage I received a *kharita* from the Government of India regarding the re-organisation of the Imperial Service Troops. The necessity of this re-organisation impressed on me the desirability of putting Obaidulla Khan in command of the Imperial Service Troops of the State for two reasons, firstly, because a military career was likely to afford him opportunities of displaying the traditional loyalty of his House to the British Crown, and secondly, because the administration of the Military department of the State was not, in my judgment, entirely satisfactory, and I was convinced that Obaidulla Khan's appointment would result in the desired improvement being speedily effected. The courage displayed by Obaidulla Khan during our encounters with Bedouin tribesmen in Arabia, was an indication of the military instinct which fitted him admirably for the responsible post I suggested for him. I spoke on the matter to my esteemed friends Mr. Bayley and Major Manners Smith, and they apprised Lord Ampthill, the officiating Viceroy, of my desire. His Excellency, too, heartily welcomed the suggestion, and Obaidulla Khan was formally appointed Colonel-in-Chief of the Imperial Service Troops. With a view to signalise the conferment of this great honour on Obaidulla Khan, and to encourage the new Colonel-in-Chief in the performance of his responsible work, I decided to hold a ceremonial Darbar to which I invited the

Agent to the Governor-General and a few other prominent personages of Central India. The Darbar was held on the 15th September, and Mr. Bayley, Major Manners Smith, General Beatson, the Inspector-General of Imperial Service Troops and several other friends honoured me with their presence.

Mr. Bayley arrived at the Sadar Manzil at 11 A.M. and was received with the usual formalities. A guard of honour presented arms, and a salute was fired from the Fatehgarh fort as he alighted from his carriage. My seat was behind a screen in the eastern portion of the main hall. On my right were the seats of my European guests, and behind them the Officers of the Imperial Service Troops, in their full dress, gave a distinctive air to the assembly. On my left were my sons, the ministers, *jagirdars* and high officials of the State. I opened the Darbar with the following speech:—

" It is a matter of no little honour and gratification to me that His Excellency the Viceroy has heartily appreciated my proposal to appoint my second son Haji Hafiz Obaidulla Khan as the Colonel-in-Chief of the Imperial Service Troops of the State. To Her late Highness belongs the credit for having created this unit, and on me has devolved the responsibility of reorganizing it. Providence having blessed me with male issue, I have considered it advisable to appoint to the chief command of these Troops my second son, who, both by temperament and training, is admirably fitted for a military career. That he may prove a worthy son of a worthy father, and, by steadfast conduct, uphold the family traditions of loyalty and attachment to the

Paramount Power, is my earnest prayer. I must also take this opportunity of recording my sense of gratitude to the Government of India for the various kindnesses it has extended to me, for its recognition of Nasrulla Khan as the Heir Apparent of the State, and for its cordial appreciation of the appointment of Obaidulla Khan as Colonel-in-Chief of the Imperial Service Troops. The presence of the Hon'ble Mr. Bayley and Major Manners Smith at to-day's function, is an index of their keen solicitude for the well being of my family and my people, and of the hearty co-operation which they have extended to me in all matters on which I have sought their assistance and advice. I am particularly thankful to General Beatson for kindly accepting my invitation, and coming all the way to Bhopal to be present at this ceremony. I now call upon Nawab Nasrulla Khan to fasten this sword of honour about the waist of his younger brother who will, in future, be styled as Colonel-in-Chief of the Imperial Service Troops, and to whom will, in future, be referred for orders all matters connected with the unit under his command. I have every hope that the Sahebzada will, please God, prove an efficient commander, and a loyal servant of the British Empire."

On the conclusion of my speech Mian Ikbal Mohammad Khan, an officer of my Bodyguard Cavalry, stepped forward with a tray bearing a sword, the hilt and scabbard of which were set with precious stones, and after Nawab Nasrulla Khan had fastened the gold belt about the waist of Obaidulla Khan, the latter addressed the assembly in the following words:—

"Your Highness, Hon'ble Mr. Bayley, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is impossible for me adequately to thank Your Highness for the great honour you have graciously conferred upon me to-day by appointing me the Colonel-in-Chief of your Imperial Service Troops, and thus including me in the band of devoted adherents of the British Crown. The bestowal, moreover, of this jewelled sword which my affectionate brother Nawab Nasrulla Khan has just presented to me in obedience to Your Highness' command, is a matter of great pride to me, for I look upon this sword as a token of Your Highness' affection, and an emblem of the responsibility Your Highness has laid on me. I am greatly honoured by the presence of the Hon'ble Mr. Bayley and Major Manners Smith at this ceremony, and am no less indebted to General Beatson under whom it will be my pride and privilege to serve. The presence of these high officers today is a source of no little encouragement to me, and makes me confident that in the discharge of my duties I can look forward to their warm countenance and cordial support. This is the first time that duties connected with the service of the Empire have been entrusted to a member of the ruling House of Bhopal, and it is my dearest wish that I may, please God, prove a worthy member of a distinguished family, and a loyal servant of a beneficent Empire. In conclusion, I pray to the Almighty for happiness and long life being granted to His Imperial Majesty the King Emperor and to Her Highness the Nawab Begam, and trust that I will be permitted on this

important occasion to sit in the line of the devoted servants of the British Crown."

Colonel Obaidulla Khan's request was granted, and when his speech was over, he was given a seat next to General Beatson, in formal recognition of the fact that he had joined the Imperial Service.

A State banquet was held at the Lal Kothi in the evening, and after the loyal toasts had been duly honoured, I rose and proposed the health of Mr. Bayley and General Beatson in the following speech :—

"Ladies and Gentlemen :—I rise to express the debt of gratitude which I owe to all of you for kindly accepting my invitation, and honouring me with a visit at this time. I am sorry the weather has interfered with our arrangements, and the military gymkhana has had to be cancelled, but this regret is, I am sure, tempered by satisfaction at the rains having done good to the crops generally. I will not weary you with a long speech, and after reiterating my gratification at your presence which is a token of your regard both for myself and Colonel Obaidulla Khan, I propose that you should rise and drink to the health of Hon'ble Mr. Bayley and General Beatson." Mr. Bayley made the following reply :—

"Your Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen :—

When Your Highness, a little while ago, asked me to ascertain whether the appointment you proposed to make would be acceptable to the Government of India, I felt sure that no apprehension need be entertained as to the answer which would be given. It was, nevertheless, with the greatest gratification

that I received a letter in which His Excellency the Viceroy instructed me to convey to Your Highness his cordial approval of the suggestion, and of the motive which had prompted it. The rulers of Bhopal have never failed to come to the fore when any question of loyalty to the British Crown has arisen—to do so has been the traditional policy of the ruling House for the last hundred and twenty years—and the outcome of Bhopal's participation in the Imperial Service movement has been that fine body of cavalry, the Victoria Lancers. It has been from the first the hope and desire of the Government of India that the Princes should be personally associated with the Imperial Service Troops which they maintain. Bhopal, as every one knows, has prospered for many years past under a succession of able female rulers, and it has been merely the accident of sex which kept Her Highness the late Begam and Your Highness from assuming the actual command of your troops. In the action which you have taken you have displayed your own loyalty and devotion to the Empire, and you have given to your son the opportunity of earning the highest distinction which is open to the scion of any princely house."

After Mr. Bayley had sat down, General Beatson rose and delivered an extremely interesting speech. He said:

" It is a matter of pride to me that I am connected with the British General who, when operating near Bhopal with a force to prevent the irruption of the Pindari free-booters into the Deccan, was the recipient of the first overtures made towards an alliance with the British by Nawab Wazir Muhammad Khan.

Little did I think when, in the old Irish home, I gazed at Sir Barry Close's picture, the representation of a sturdy warrior with a kindly sunburnt face, his sword at his side and a treaty in his hand, that I should one day stand in the very honourable and important position I now do, endeavouring, with all my heart and mind, to knit closer the ties of friendship he began so long ago. In the intensely critical moments of the Indian rebellion, the great Sikandar Begam ruled the destinies of Bhopal. Throughout that terrible time, she bore herself true to the splendid traditions of her family, upholding truth, honour, and loyalty under conditions of difficulty and temptation few can imagine. A grant of territory, honours, and her recognition as Ruler in her own right, followed these services. In 1868, when Sikandar Begam passed to her rest, she was succeeded by her daughter Shah Jahan Begam, and recently by Your Highness, who have both so steadily maintained the reputation of the State for good administration and undeviating loyalty. During Your Highness' journey to Mecca and Medina, you had an opportunity of seeing the effects of misrule, and must have fully realized in your passage through a country devoid of railways, roads and all the ordinary comforts of civilization, where both life and property are ever in danger, the inestimable benefits conferred on this country by *Pax Britannica.* It was to help to maintain this land in peace that the Shah Jahan Begam, in 1889, offered troops for the defence of the North-West Frontier, but it was not until 1892 that the Victoria Lancers were reorganized and embodied as an Imperial Service Corps.

Your Highness will be glad to know that they are becoming day by day more efficient, and it was a great pleasure to me, at my last inspection, to find a batch of recruits of an excellent stamp drawn from your own territory. I have this year been able to report a great improvement in musketry; whilst in signalling the corps can hold its own with the best regiments in the Indian Army. This morning, Your Highness has nominated your son the Colonel Commandant, and I should like to assure you how welcome that appointment is. In making it we realize with joy your desire to keep in closer touch with your regiment, and we would beg of you to make every possible use of it for State purposes. The employment of detachments in State work from time to time will give officers and men chances of showing their ability, of grasping initiative, and of assuming responsibility. It will enable your State to be controlled by fewer irregular troops, and thus lighten your military budget. The scheme of an Imperial Service force drawn from the State was devised, not only to provide an addition to the Indian Army, welcome though that be, but it was hoped that it would give an outlet for the energies of the scions of princely and noble families, and enable them to follow the service of the sword, by which so many of their forefathers won their properties and undying fame. Your Highness' nomination of the Sahibzada Obaidula Khan as Commandant of your Victoria Lancers, is, therefore, a most desirable step in the right direction, which will, it is hoped, be followed by other rulers."

After the speeches were over, the customary

distribution of garlands and *itr* and *pan* was made, and that done, I returned to my palace. Mr. Bayley left for Indore the same night, and General Beatson and the other guests departed the following afternoon.

The history of my House ever since Sardar Dost Mohammed Khan carved a small kingdom for himself out of the wreckage of the Mughal Empire in 1120 A. H., is a record of constant warfare down to the day on which my grandmother ascended the *masnad* in the year 1285 A. H. All these years, the rulers of Bhopal had no respite, and waged a life and death struggle, hemmed in on all sides by enemies, who, by God's grace, were always worsted whenever they crossed swords. The pages of history bear eloquent testimony to the prowess of the doughty warriors who saved Bhopal from extinction in those troublous times. The great sepoy mutiny of 1857 was also a time of great danger and difficulty. That eventful hour found the destinies of Bhopal in the capable hands of Nawab Sikandar Begam, and a woman as the head of government at such a time, would not, ordinarily, be considered a powerful factor for the maintenance of law and order. In Nawab Sikandar Begam's veins, however, ran the blood of her valiant ancestors, and those days of general unrest and disorder manifestly needed a ruler of her masterful personality whose forceful administration conquered all difficulties, and proved that a woman can be both a strong ruler and a good statesman. Those stormy times have been followed by a new era of peace and order, such as the country has never known throughout her chequered history, and, under the protection of the British Government,

the Indian States enjoy a stability and prosperity unparalleled in their past history. Nawab Sikander Begam not only widened the limits of her dominions, she considerably enhanced the prosperity of her State, and when she passed from the scene of her triumphs, the people were far more contented and prosperous than they were when she assumed the reins of administration.

It pains me beyond measure to think that the fighting race of men, whose deeds of valour are inscribed for all time on the pages of history, has become soft and decadent under the influence of peaceful times. Luxury and indolence are now the chief objects of worship, and idle gossip is considered the sweetest pleasure of life. Military ardour is so completely gone, that even for the ranks of its Army the State has been compelled to draw recruits from outside. When I assumed the reins of government, this aspect of general decline and decay was a source of profound disappointment to me, for I was shocked to discover that the local element was insignificant both in the civil side of the administration and in the ranks of the State Army. The civil side is always a complicated problem, and progress in that field is, in all cases, a long drawn out struggle, but speedier results can be looked forward to in the military line, and bearing that in mind, I appointed my own son a Colonel in the State Army, hoping that his example would be a powerful incentive to others, and would knock down the walls of general apathy and neglect. At the same time I started a Military school in September 1904, in order that the boys of the higher classes may

acquire a military training and pass out of the institution as officers into the State Army. The school has been in existence for five years, and the results up to the time of writing have been anything but satisfactory. Perhaps Obaidulla Khan's endeavours may produce a good effect in future years which do not, at present, seem to be particularly bright with promise.

CHAPTER XVII

A Visit to Indore and Bombay

In August 1904, Mr. and Mrs. Bayley invited me to Indore and insisted that I should bring Birjis Jahan with me. I wrote in reply that I should be glad to come in the first week of November. Mr. and Mrs. Bayley were delighted at my accepting their invitation, and I, too, was keenly looking forward to my visit to them. Towards the end of October, however, my grandson Habibulla Khan fell ill with pneumonia, and I was very much afraid that my departure for Indore would have to be postponed. Habibulla Khan was attended by Miss Blong, and, thanks to her excellent treatment, he was, by God's grace, soon pronounced out of danger. I was thus able to proceed to Indore on the 5th November, and my sons and Birjis Jahan accompanied me. At Indore station Mr. and Mrs. Bayley and the members of their staff received me. A guard of honour was drawn up on the platform, and a salute was fired as I alighted from my saloon. From the station I drove to the bungalow which Mr. Bayley's first Assistant, Mr. Kelly, had vacated for my use. I shall never forget the kindness and courtesy that I received at the hands of my host and hostess during my stay at Indore. They took me round to all the interesting sights of the place, and I spent a most enjoyable time. On the evening of the 8th November, Mr. and Mrs. Bayley held

a Banquet and invited the European ladies and gentlemen of the place to meet me. After the toast of the King Emperor had been honoured, Mr. Bayley proposed my health in the following speech :—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—You have just joined me in drinking the health of His Most Gracious Majesty the King Emperor, and I feel sure that you will agree with me that there can be no more fitting sequel to that toast than that which I am about to propose—the health of one of the most loyal of His Majesty's feudatory Princes of India, Her Highness the Begam of Bhopal. It has been my privilege to propose Her Highness' health on several occasions, and the task is one which I perform with ever-increasing pleasure, for my experience is that of all who have the honour of Her Highness' acquaintance, that with increasing knowledge comes increasing regard for her both as a lady pre-eminent in all womanly qualities, and as a Chief whose capacity and industry are in no way inferior to those of any Ruler of the opposite, and, what is sometimes termed, I often think without any sufficient reason, the stronger sex. The loyalty of the Chiefs of Bhopal to the Crown is so well known that it seems superfluous to dilate on it, but the story is one which cannot be too often repeated. It dates back to the early days of the British Empire in India. In the days of Aurangzeb, Her Highness' ancestor, Dost Muhammad, carved out for himself, after the fashion of that time, a principality in Bhopal and the surrounding country. The territories comprised in his Chiefship underwent various vicissitudes after his death, till rather more than 100 years ago they were nearly all swallow-

ed up by more powerful neighbours. Then arose Wazir Muhammad, a kinsman of the previous Chiefs, who stemmed the tide of invasion, and won back much of the possessions which had been lost. In 1809 Wazir Muhammad sought an alliance with the British which, according to the policy of non-intervention in the affairs of the Native States then prevalent, was refused, and he had to fight single-handed against his enemies, who, after besieging him in his capital for nine months, were compelled to retire unsuccessful. Wiser counsels then prevailed, and when in 1817, the British Government set itself to crush the Pindaries, it sought the alliance which it had previously rejected. In the following year a formal treaty was made under which Bhopal and the British Government were firmly bound to one another. The stipulations then made have been faithfully performed on both sides. Nawab Nazar Muhammad, with whom the treaty was made, died soon after its ratification, but his policy has been continued with devoted loyalty to the present day by the succession of able female rulers, who have followed him on the *masnad*, and the names of the Qudsia Begam, the Sikandar Begam, the Shah Jahan Begam, and now of the Sultan Jahan Begam, have become household words throughout the Empire for loyalty and devotion. In the dark days of the Mutiny, the Crown had no more staunch and valued friend than Her Highness' grandmother, the late Sikandar Begam. Her Highness herself is following, and, we all trust, will long be spared to follow in the footsteps of her ancestors, and only the other day gave, as you are all aware, a proof of this dis-

position by offering to increase the forces which she already contributes for the defence of the Empire, and by appointing to the command of her Imperial Service Troops, her second son, Colonel Sahibzada Hafiz Muhammad Obaidulla Khan, whom with his elder brother the Nawab Muhammad Nasrulla Khan, who recently governed the State with ability and success during his mother's absence at Mecca, we welcome here to-night. Here I might well leave the toast in your hands, knowing that no words of mine are needed to commend it to you, but I cannot resist the desire to express the pride and pleasure which I feel in welcoming Her Highness as my guest to-night. The occasion is a very special one, for it is not only Her Highness' first visit to Indore, but the first which has been paid by any Ruler of Bhopal, except in passing through, to the headquarters of the Central India Agency. It has long been my hope and Mrs. Bayley's, that we should be honoured by a visit from Her Highness, and we should have appreciated it very much at any time, but we specially value it now, for she has come at a time when to do so has caused her no little personal inconvenience, and when she is only just recovering from very serious anxiety on account of the health of her beloved grandson who has recently undergone a grave illness. Happily the danger is now averted, and there is every reason to hope that all will go well, but the fact that she has come at this time, illustrates perhaps more forcibly than anything else could, one of Her Highness' strongest and most marked characteristics—her inflexible determination to keep a promise once made. In conclusion I have only to say that I earnestly

trust that Her Highness' first visit will not be her last, and to assure her that there is no place in India where she will receive a more hearty welcome than at Indore.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you the health of H. H. the Nawab Sultan Jahan Begam of Bhopal."

My reply to Mr. Bayley's speech was as follows :—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—I find it an impossible task to try adequately to express my sense of indebtedness to Mr. and Mrs. Bayley for the kindness they have extended to me and my family ever since their arrival in Central India. To endeavour to express the pleasure afforded me by my visit to Indore as their guest, is also, I am afraid, equally impossible. I feel highly honoured by the kind words in which Mr. Bayley has spoken of the loyalty of my House, and of my own services to the British Government. The relations of my predecessors with the Central India Agency have always been extremely cordial. Providence has favoured me with equally good fortune, and the mantle of responsibility fell on me in the time of Mr. Bayley, of whose friendship for my family and ardent solicitude for our well being, you are all interested witnesses. The hospitality which Mr. and Mrs. Bayley have extended to me, and the many favours of which I have been the recipient at their hands during my short stay here, will, I assure you, be long remembered by me, and will be a powerful inducement to me to seek opportunities in future years of coming here to renew the many friendships I have made. I will not inflict a long speech on you, and after praying for the King Emperor's prosperity and happiness, I shall

beg you all to stand up and drink to the health of my host and hostess, the Hon'ble Mr. and Mrs. Bayley."

I left Indore on the 9th November, and though my departure was private, yet my distinguished host and the officers of his staff came to the station to bid me good-bye.

When Lord Curzon returned to India upon his term of office being extended, he was met at Bombay by several Indian Princes. Having made up my mind to proceed to Bombay to receive His Excellency, I informed Mr. Bayley accordingly. The latter was also intending to go to Bombay, and it was, therefore, settled that I should start from Bhopal on the 7th December, and join him at Khandwa station. On the appointed date I left for Bombay accompanied by the Political Agent and my sons, but my train was late, and Mr. Bayley had left Khandwa before our arrival. Lord Curzon landed in Bombay on Friday, and was received with the usual formalities by the Governor of Bombay, the Indian Princes and high officials of the British Government. As it was feared that I would be inconvenienced by the great rush of visitors expected at the landing place, I was advised not to go in person, and sent my sons instead to receive His Excellency on my behalf. On shaking hands with Colonel Obaidulla Khan, His Excellency asked if he was my second son who had recently been appointed to the command of the Imperial Service Lancers.

I met His Excellency at Government House where I had the pleasure of making the

acquaintance of Lord and Lady Lamington also. In the afternoon I attended the At Home given by Lord and Lady Lamington in honour of the Viceroy, and spent a most agreeable time in the beautiful grounds of Government House. Colonel Meade too was in Bombay, and it was a great pleasure to meet him after such a long time. I stayed in Bombay for about a fortnight, and returned to Bhopal on the 24th December.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE FOURTH YEAR—THE SAILANA MANŒUVRES—COLONEL OBAIDULLA KHAN'S VISIT TO GWALIOR—BIRTH OF WAHIDUZ ZAFAR KHAN—MEETING WITH LADY CURZON—VISIT TO SEHORE—FAREWELL PARTY AT AHMEDABAD PALACE—BIRTH OF RAFIQULLA KHAN—AHMEDABAD

THIS year the Annual Manœuvres of the Indian Army in Central India were held on a large scale, and a military camp was temporarily established at Sailana. Colonel Obaidulla Khan also decided to take part in the Manœuvres with his regiment of Imperial Service Troops. Although this was his first experience of conditions closely approaching those of actual field service, yet, accustomed as he was to hard riding and shooting since his childhood, I knew that camp-life would suit him admirably, and the work in the Manœuvres would be entirely to his taste. The other States of Central India also undertook to send troops on this occasion, for such Manœuvres always provide excellent opportunities for bringing home the lessons of modern warfare to the troops engaged in them. His Highness the Maharaja of Faridkot, at this

time, honoured me with a *kharita** in which he invited my Imperial Service Troops to participate in the Annual Athletic meeting. I wrote back to His Highness that I would have been only too delighted to send representatives from my regiment, but it was impossible to do so owing to the Victoria Lancers having left Bhopal to take part in the Sailana Manœuvres.

On the 2nd January 1905, in the depth of winter, the Victoria Lancers left Bhopal for Indore by road. At 7 o'clock in the morning the regiment paraded in the Palace square under the command of Colonel Obaidulla Khan. I reviewed and said good-bye to the regiment from a balcony. The Lancers took leave of me, and marched out of the square to the lively tunes of the State Band which led the procession. My sons were in attendance on me in the Palace, and a vast concourse of people watched the

* The following is a copy of His Highness' *kharita*

Your Highness,

I have great pleasure in informing you that General Beatson, Inspector General of Imperial Service Troops, has very kindly accepted my offer to hold the 2nd Annual Athletic meeting for Imperial Service Troops at Faridkot in January 1905, on the occasion of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab's visit to Faridkot to open the New Cantonment I have made for my Imperial Service Sappers. I hope that Your Highness will be pleased to allow your Imperial Service Troops to compete at this meeting, and thereby honour me with their presence in my State. The details of the competition are being arranged by Captain A. E. Panet, R.E., Inspecting Officer, Imperial Service Sappers, who is assisting me in this matter. He will send all necessary information through the Inspecting Officer of your Imperial Service Troops.

Trusting that this will find your Highness in good health.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) BATLIM SINGH,
Raja of Faridkot.

proceedings outside. Major Manners Smith met the regiment at Sehore, and Colonel Obaidulla Khan in company with his brothers, who had motored from Bhopal to join him there, had breakfast at the Agency house. Marching by the way of Ashta and Maitwara, the regiment arrived at Indore in about six or seven days. Here Colonel Obaidulla Khan stayed at the Residency as a guest of Mr. Bayley, whose long experience of India and of our ways and customs, made him an ideal host. He well knew how fond I was of my children, so when Colonel Obaidulla Khan left Indore with his regiment to take part in the Manœuvres, Mr. Bayley wrote a very nice letter to assure me that all was well with Obaidulla Khan and the Victoria Lancers. "Please do not consider this," he wrote, "as a letter which required an answer, for it is merely a line to tell you that the Colonel saheb left Indore for Mhow this morning. He was looking exceedingly well, and seemed very happy. It was a great pleasure to have him in the house, and I hope that he enjoyed his short stay. I saw the Victoria Lancers start this morning, and was much pleased with the appearance of both men and horses."

Mr. Bayley was the very essence of kindness and courtesy not only to my family but to all the Ruling Princes with whom he came in contact. Colonel Obaidulla Khan wrote to me a long account of the generous hospitality extended to him by Mr. Bayley, and I wrote to the latter to express my sense of indebtedness to him for always going out of his way to do everything possible for my sons and myself.

The regiment did extremely well at the Sailana camp, and Colonel Obaidulla Khan, by his industry and devotion to duty, abundantly justified his selection for the appointment he held. By dint of sheer hard work he proved that he did not hold his appointment, as honorary officers sometimes do, merely to keep up appearances, but that he was out to prove himself the right man in the right place. General Sir O'Moore Creagh, who was the Chief Umpire at the Manœuvres, and the other British officers who attended the Sailana camp, showed the greatest regard for Colonel Obaidulla Khan who wrote to me highly interesting accounts of his daily work, and expressed deep appreciation of the kind assistance he received from everybody in all matters. The weather was fearfully cold, and I was sometimes greatly afraid lest Obaidulla Khan should neglect his health in his enthusiasm for the work he was engaged in. I wrote to Captain Ellwood, the Inspecting Officer of Central India States Cavalry and a close friend of my family, and asked him kindly to see to it that Obaidulla Khan looked after his health properly. Captain Ellwood's reply deserves to be quoted in full. He wrote: "I was exceedingly pleased to receive your letter. It has been very cold here too so cold that buckets containing water had 1½ inches frozen thick in the morning. I am afraid this excessive cold, added to the hailstone, must have done much damage to the crops. I am very sorry for the ryots who were expecting an unprecedented heavy crop in both wheat and gram. You will be glad to know that Colonel Sahibzada is very well indeed. In fact he now scarce-

ly knows what the word "fatigue" means. He has been working very hard, riding long distances for a continuous time, and has taken the greatest interest in the manœuvring of regiments and brigades. Being such a keen and good sportsman, he is very quick to pick up all the ruling features of the present day battlefield. It is the greatest pleasure to me to have such an apt pupil and good friend with me as I have in your son. I think you would be astonished at the amount of knowledge he has obtained during this short period, and I feel sure that as Colonel of Your Highness's regiment of Lancers he will not be a mere figurehead. I am seeing that the Sahebzada takes every care of himself. You will have heard from him that he will be back in Bhopal earlier than was originally expected, and I am sure you will be pleased to see him back again. The health of the Bhopal Lancers has been very good, only two or three men being sick and unfit for parade. The horses have had hard work."

On the departure of Bhopal Imperial Service Troops from the Sailana camp, General Sir O'Moore Creagh expressed very high appreciation of the quality of their work, which, in his opinion, was indisputable proof of the improvement in the regiment's discipline and efficiency under Obaidulla Khan's command. My son's personal example, he said, gave an excellent lead to the men of the Victoria Lancers who could not wish for better guidance.

The regiment returned to Bhopal on the 3rd February. Colonel Obaidulla Khan, who had arrived at Bhopal a few days previously in order to be present at the *Id* festival, rejoined his regiment before

its formal entry into the capital. At 8 in the morning, the Lancers were met by Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Sahebzada Hamidulla Khan outside the town, and I received them at the Sadar Manzil with the formalities observed at their departure. A salute of five guns to which Colonel Obaidulla Khan is entitled as a son of the Ruler, was fired from the Fatehgarh fort to announce the return of the Victoria Lancers under the command of their Colonel-in-Chief.

A few days later I received the following important letter from Captain Ellwood which was an expression of expert opinion upon the work of my troops in the Manœuvres:

"It is necessary for me to go to Indore for four or five days, and therefore I must leave to-day, but before doing so, I wish to thank Your Highness for the Artillery, Infantry and Bodyguard who, by their co-operation, have materially aided in the instruction of Your Highness' regiment of Imperial Service Lancers, and I desire also to place on record my appreciation of the willing manner in which all ranks have worked, and the keenness to learn which animated them. Your Highness' Bodyguard turned out each day to either take part or to watch, and when called on to carry out any manœuvre, entered fully into the spirit of the day's work. The Infantry and Artillery worked most willingly, and although they have been the means of giving the Imperial Service Lancers practical object lessons, I trust that they themselves have picked up some information of their profession. And, above all, I record with the sincerest pleasure the example set by your son,

Colonel Sahibzada Obaidulla Khan, an example which undoubtedly has been felt by every officer and man. To instruct him has been my greatest happiness, for he has shown himself an apt pupil, quick to apply his knowledge and his keenness conspicuous. His help has been inestimable. I know that his position as Colonel-in-Chief of Your Highness' regiment of Imperial Service Lancers, a position which he has intended shall not be that of a nominal figurehead, occupies much of his valuable time, but I feel sure he feels that war is an art, and as with any other art, the natural gift must be purified and perfected by iron application to study and practice. I feel sure he has concluded this camp of exercise feeling that time has not been wasted, but rather with a keener insight into the profession he has voluntarily taken up, and with the pleasure of being able to report to Your Highness of work done and knowledge gained."

Manœuvres were also held this year at Gwalior under the orders of His Highness the Maharaja Scindhia who personally commands his army, and takes the keenest interest in military matters. His Highness sent me a telegram on the 12th February asking me to permit Colonel Obaidulla Khan to take part in the Manœuvres as a guest of the Gwalior Darbar. I complied with His Highness' wish with the greatest pleasure, and Colonel Obaidulla Khan left for Gwalior on the 16th February. The remarkable hospitality and courtesy extended by His Highness the Maharaja to Obaidulla Khan revived the memory of the cordial relations which existed between His Highness' predecessor, Maharaja

Jayaji Rao Scindhia and my grandmother Nawab Sikandar Begam.

On the 26th February 1905 at 3 A.M. a son was born to the wife of Colonel Obaidulla Khan. Obaidulla was away at Gwalior, and a telegram was immediately sent to him, but it did not reach him for some time, as he had left his camp when the Telegram arrived. On receipt of it he caught the first train at Guna, and arrived at Bhopal at midnight by the Punjab Mail. Congratulatory telegrams were received from His Highness the Maharaja Scindhia, Major Daly, the Agent to the Governor-General, Major Manners Smith, Political Agent in Bhopal, and from other friends. Only some five hours after the baby was born, General Sir O'Moore Creagh came up to the Sadar Manzil to see me. The baby was brought and Sir O'Moore, taking him up in his arms, said to me: "Here is a Colonel's son in the arms of a General. I hope he will be brave and strong, and will, like his father, render distinguished services to the British Empire." The General was the first man to take the little one in his arms, and I told him that that was a happy omen. The *aqiqa* ceremony was held on the seventh day, and I chose the name Wahiduz Zafar Khan for the newborn. On the 29th Moharram and 2nd Safar *joras* were presented on my behalf and that of Nawab Nasrulla Khan respectively, with the ceremonial observed by my family on such occasions. Many people sought permission to present *joras*, but their request was not granted. Only the mistresses and students of the Sultania and Victoria Girls' School were permitted to bring *joras*, as I wanted to test the progress made by these insti-

HER HIGHNESS THE BEGAM WITH HER GRANDSONS, HABIBULLA KHAN AND WAHIDUZZAFAR KHAN.

tutions in the art of embroidery. The lovely samples of their work were a source of profound satisfaction to me, and I rewarded them all with suitable gifts and prizes.

The late Lady Curzon is remembered to this day with affection and respect, and it is no exaggeration to say that her friends will always retain many pleasant memories of her stay in this country. Her Excellency's illness in the course of her visit to England in 1904 had caused great anxiety to her friends generally, and to myself in particular, for I cherished grateful recollections of the kindnesses she had extended to me when I was Heir Apparent. The news of her recovery was extremely welcome, and as soon as I learnt that Her Excellency was likely to return to India very soon, I resolved to see her, and offer my hearty congratulations personally on her restoration to health. At first I thought of proceeding to Calcutta or to Simla, but later on decided to meet Her Excellency at Itarsi. When Lady Curzon landed in Bombay, I sent her a telegram of hearty greetings and warm congratulations, and on the 4th March 1905, I left by special train for Itarsi, accompanied by the Political Agent and the Judicial Minister. Her Excellency's special train arrived at Itarsi at 1 P.M. and I had a long interview with her in the station waiting room. I was delighted to find Her Excellency looking well and strong, and little did I think that we shall all soon be mourning her death. Lady Curzon had a genuine liking for the country, and her unexpected death was a great blow to her friends.

I found both Major and Mrs. Manners Smith such

delightful companions that my acquaintance with them soon matured into warm friendship. They were blessed with daughters so happy and bright, and so full of joy and of fun, that I immensely enjoyed the time I spent with them. Ever since my return from Indore, they had been pressing me to spend a few days with them at Sehore. I accepted their invitation, and paid a visit to them in March. Hamidulla accompanied me, and his elder brothers arrived a day later. Major Manners Smith had a camp pitched for me near his house and throughout my stay Bertha looked after us most assiduously. Mrs. Manners Smith's brother, Mr. Rankin, was also there, and I was greatly pleased to make his acquaintance. A large garden party was held by our host who invited all the military officers of the station and the leading citizens to meet me. To enable me thoroughly to enjoy the days I spent at Sehore, all formalities were dispensed with, and I could not have passed a more agreeable time anywhere. Miss Ada Rankin, too, obliged me by organizing a special tea party, and asking her friends to meet me.

I learnt at Sehore that Major Manners Smith had been temporarily appointed Resident in Nepal. His promotion occasioned us all great pleasure, but we keenly felt the loss which his transfer meant to Bhopal. Major Manners Smith, too, had been looking forward to spending a few years more at the Bhopal Agency, but the sudden illness of the Resident in Nepal had brought him urgent orders. I invited him to a farewell breakfast at Ahmedabad Palace which was under construction at the time. The

LADY CURZON.

gardens were being newly laid, and at that stage only showed a couple of newly planted trees, and a few footpaths in grounds devoid of all vegetation. For the breakfast party a *shamiana* was erected and beautifully decorated with flowers which suited the colour scheme that had been followed. The splendid view of the valley to the west, and the silver sheet of water stretching to the foot of the brown hills far away in a panorama of surpassing loveliness, amply made up for the rather dismal appearance of the newly laid grounds, and seemed to cast a spell on everybody. Such gatherings are often memorable because of the surroundings in which they are held, and though the incomplete buildings of the Palace stood in a garden still in a state of infancy, yet the enchanting views of the lake appeared to lend a peculiar charm. All my sons, and the members of the family of the late Mr. Cook were present to do honour to my guests, whom it was a pleasure to me to entertain, but a very great pain to say good-bye. In the afternoon a polo match was played, and Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Colonel Obaidulla Khan were At Home. Our guests then bade us good-bye, and on the 28th of March left for Nepal.

On Monday the 8th May 1905, corresponding to the 2nd Rabiul Awwal 1323 A. H., just before daybreak, a second son was born to Nawab Nasrulla Khan. We have a custom in our family that on the birth of a son to the eldest brother, the younger brothers go to his house and express their joy by firing off guns. They are received with great kindness, and each is honoured with a suitable present which is called "Naig." On

the birth of Habibullah, Obaidulla Khan and Hamidulla Khan were both away with me in the Holy Land, so the traditional ceremony could not be observed. On this occasion, however, both the brothers went to the Shaukat Mahal, and after the *feu-de-joie* were received by Nawab Nasrulla Khan who presented a horse to Obaidulla Khan; and a rifle to his youngest brother. The *aqiqa* ceremony was held on the seventh day and I chose the name Mohammad Rafiqulla Khan for the newborn. The customary presentations of *joras* took place with the usual ceremonial on the 23rd Jamadius Sani on behalf of Hamidulla Khan and myself, and on the 1st Rajab on that of Colonel Obaidulla Khan.

Sardar Dost Mohammad Khan, the founder of the House of Bhopal, is also the founder of the eminence which the city of Bhopal has gained in recent times. The capital of the state at the time when my House first established its power in Central India, was Jagdeshpur. Sardar Dost Mohammad constructed a fort and some excellent buildings at that place, and altered its name to Islamnagar. But the place was not well situated for purposes of defence, so Dost Mohammad Khan's choice fell upon Bhopal, where the hills and a big lake conferred important natural advantages on the defenders. Bhopal was hardly better than a village in those times, and Dost Mohammad Khan built the Fatehgarh fort and an enciente round the city, both of which proved impregnable at the time of Marhatta invasion. How that terrible storm was weathered by the brave band which manned the walls of Fatehgarh, and how the tide rolled back after spend-

MAJOR J. MANNERS-SMITH, V.C.

ing its force on the rock of that memorable defence, is beyond doubt the most glorious chapter of the annals of my House.

Sardar Dost Mohammad Khan's successors took the greatest interest in the enlargement and improvement of the city; hence the extensions which have been made from time to time. Nawab Jahangir Mohammad Khan, my maternal grand-father, built a cantonment at some distance from the city; it is called Jahangirabad after him. The population of Jahangirabad has considerably increased in the course of time, and the military barracks, the Guest House, and the other buildings which have sprung up, have added to the natural charm of the lower lake which divides Jahangirabad from the main town. In the city itself Nawab Sikandar Begam built the Moti Masjid and the Moti Mahal, both of which are picturesque pieces of architecture. The entire northern extension of the town is due to Nawab Shahajahan Begam, and the Taj Mahal, the Ali Manzil and the other stately buildings of Shahjahanabad, are evidences of the keen interest which Her late Highness took in the adornment of her capital. On my own accession I found the main town too densely populated, and the state of congestion there and at Shahjahanabad made the adoption of sanitary measures absolutely imperative. Compelled by sheer necessity to seek fresh air in healthier surroundings, I chose the present site of Ahmedabad Palace for my new residence. The hill, on which the Palace is situated, was then known as Maulvi Ziauddin-ki-Tekri, and the charm of its situation by water's edge

had often appealed to my husband, the late Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk, who was a frequent visitor of the spot. I, therefore, decided to name the place after him, and gave orders for it to be called Ahmedabad. A beautiful garden has now been laid out, and offices and bungalows have been constructed for my staff. The construction of the new Palace was sufficiently advanced in the year 1323 A.H. (1905) to allow of my taking up residence in it on my return from the tour of the Western district. From the very first the Palace and the other buildings of Ahmedabad were intended for the use of Hamidulla Khan, for his elder brothers have built separate residences for themselves. Another consideration which weighed with me when I decided to build Ahmedabad was, that the new works offered employment to a large number of workless labourers.

On the death of my great grandmother Nawab Qudsia Begam, her *jagir* reverted to the State, while the property of her *deorhi* descended to the Nawab Shah Jahan Begam. Considerable arrears of revenue remained to be realized from the *mustajirs* of Nawab Qudsia Begam's *jagir* at the time of her death, and the inspection of old records and the work of actual realization was entrusted by my mother to Shaikh Mohammad Hasan. This proved a task of tremendous difficulty, and although twenty years had elapsed since it was taken in hand, I found the work incomplete on my accession. By a remarkable coincidence, the Heir Apparent of the State has, for the last four generations, been the only heir of the Ruler, and thus the succession to the *masnad* has carried with it the right to inherit

MRS. MANNERS-SMITH.

the entire property of the late Ruler's *deorhi*. On assuming the reins of administration I gave some time to the inspection of old files connected with this matter, but my preoccupations with more important work of the State compelled me to entrust this responsibility to Nawab Nasrulla Khan in order to hasten the termination of the work. The papers were sent up to me for final orders after Nasrulla Khan had recorded his opinion thereon, and in the 1981 cases submitted to me, I approved of Nasrulla Khan's suggestions in respect of 1865, and the rest were returned for further inquiry. Most of the defaulters had either died or been reduced to very straitened circumstances. Out of the outstanding arrears of about 12 lakhs of rupees, only about a lakh and a half was realised, and remissions were granted in respect of the remainder.

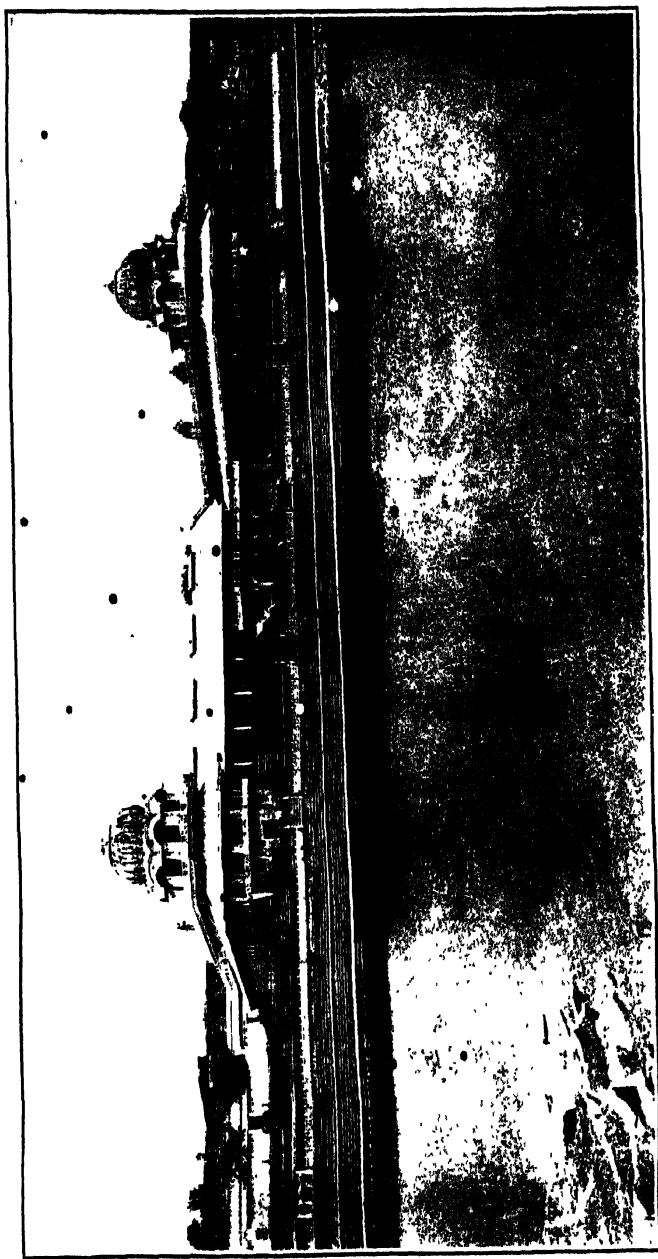
The five years' settlement had been completed, and the question of a new settlement of longer duration was now being carefully considered. The collection of revenue was very much more satisfactory as compared with previous years, and only an insignificant amount remained to be realized. About 14,017 bighas of fallow land were brought under the plough. Two lakhs of rupees, which, according to the usage of the State, the *mustajirs* offered as *nazrana* on the termination of the new settlement, were also remitted.

An increase was sanctioned in the strength of the Mounted Police, and the proportion of a policeman to every 3 square miles was established. This gave an average of a policeman per 283 of the population. Four hundred rifles were given

to the police, and an allotment of Rs. 19,000 was sanctioned for uniforms in the new budget. The year's record showed considerable improvement in the efficiency of the department, and for this great credit was due to Captain Abdul Qayyum Khan who had to face considerable difficulties.

Particular attention was given to the administration of the Forest department, the state of which was far from satisfactory, and a set of new rules and regulations was drawn up.

As a result of constant endeavours made with a view to popularise education in the State, an increase of 1,177 was recorded in the number of students on the rolls, and the total number of boys receiving English education was reported to be 225. Five candidates went up for the Entrance examination of the Calcutta University, and three were declared successful. None of the three successful candidates was a resident of Bhopal.

During the ministry of Maulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, the local High school had been affiliated to the Calcutta University, but the arrangement did not quite suit the boys of Bhopal. Steps were, therefore, taken for the institution being affiliated to the Allahabad University. On the recommendation of Maulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, Maulvi Lutfur Rahman had been appointed Director of Public Instruction in the State, but the latter had no knowledge of the requirements of modern education, and it was necessary to find for the post somebody more abreast of the times. Moulvi Abdul Ghafoor Shahbaz, who combined a knowledge of English with

THE BE-NAZIR PALACE.

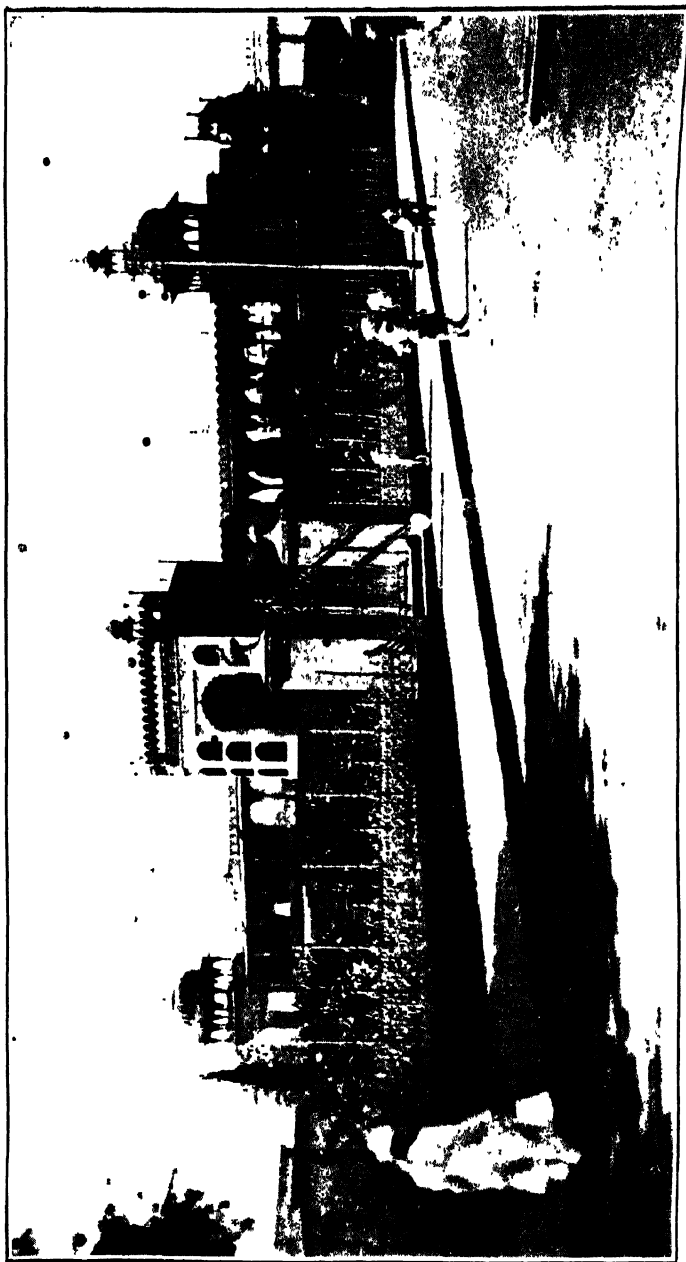
scholarly attainments in oriental languages, was appointed Director.

Daftar-i-Insha, the office of the Ruler of the State, has always had to cope with heavy work. The very fact that the orders issued by me in the course of the year, totalled 51,881, is an indication of the amount of business my office had to get through. Rules were drafted for greater efficiency and despatch being secured in the disposal of daily work, and a few changes and modifications were introduced in the office routine.

On the expiry of the period for which M. Mumtaz Ali Khan's services had been lent by the United Provinces Government, Moulvi Nizamuddin Hasan was appointed Moin'ul Moham. His services were borrowed from the Home Department of the Government, and he took over charge of his new office on the 16th September 1904.

The condition of those illiterate women who are left unprovided for on the death of their husbands or guardians, is extremely pitiable. They have to pass their lives in abject poverty, and their distress is great if they have little children also to look after. Among the class of people who entirely depend upon domestic service or manual labour for their daily livelihood, women are frequently to be found in desperately straitened circumstances, and it is small wonder if they are either starved to death, or easily succumb to temptation. Bhopal, too, has its problem of the unemployed and the unprovided for, but the distress here has never been so acute as in the other parts of the country, chiefly because of the proverbial generosity of my predecessors, whose names

will always shine in history for the fortunes they gave away in charitable gifts, and the relief they afforded to the poor. But no amount of generosity or philanthropy can entirely prevent poverty and starvation, and human society is so curiously constituted, that charity sometimes defeats its own ends, and exercises an unwholesome influence by creating excessive complacence which leads to idleness and makes people an undesirable burden on public funds. I was, therefore, anxious to effect an improvement in the general conditions by enhancing the usefulness of the women to whom relief was afforded.

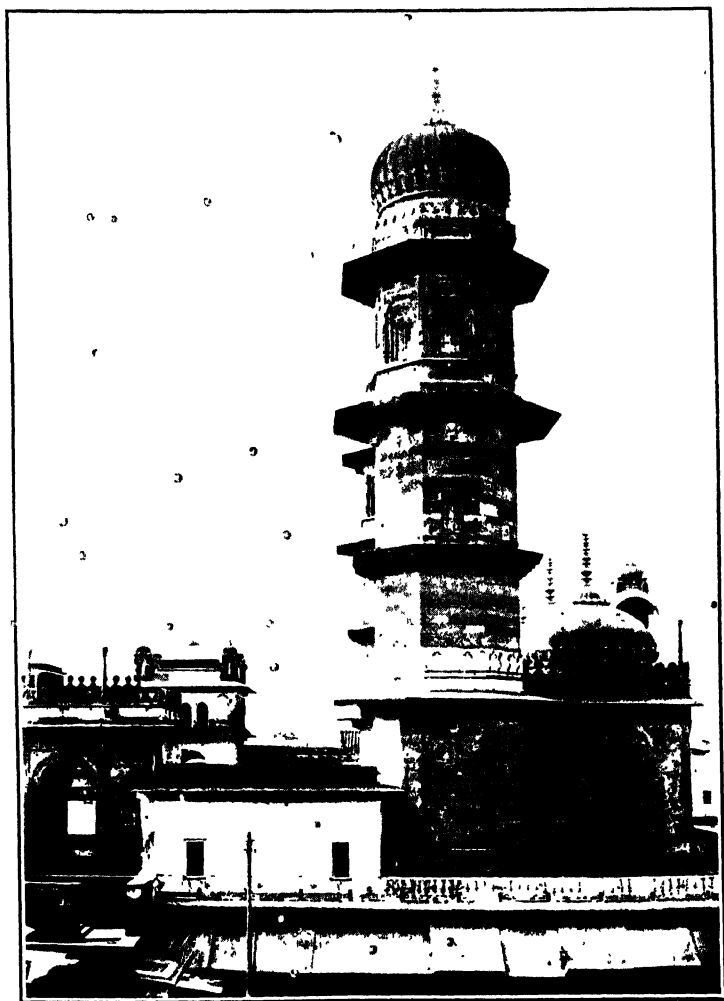
After a careful consideration of the question in all its bearings, I decided to open a school in which women of the poorest classes could be taught to make ordinary things of household use and thus learn the art of helping themselves. Some nobles and officials of the State took up the matter vigorously, and expressed a desire to take part in this beneficent movement and promised donations to it according to their means. This was a hopeful sign, for just as it is the duty of the administration to serve the public, so is it incumbent on the higher classes to co-operate with the administration, and help the needy and the poor, so far as in them lies. A public meeting was accordingly held in the Shaukat Mahal under the presidency of M. Nizamuddin Hasan, B.A., B.L., the Moinul Moham, and almost all the leading nobles, officials, lawyers and citizens of Bhopal were present. A few speeches were made, and apart from the sum of Rs. 1,600 collected on the spot, a number of donations and monthly subscriptions were promised. For the new school I sanctioned

THE MOTI MASJID, BHOPAL.

Rs. 100 per mensem from the State, and Rs. 50 from the *Deorhi-Khas*, Hamidulla Khan adding Rs. 50 per mensem from his own *jagir*. The opening ceremony of the school was performed on the 23rd May 1905 at the Shaukat Mahal, and in connection with it an important meeting was convened by the Moinul Moham. On account of the unavoidable absence of Nawab Nasrulla Khan, Colonel Obaidulla Khan presided at the meeting, which was attended by Hamidulla Khan and all the prominent officials and residents of the city. I was represented at the meeting by Birjis Jahan Begam.

The Moinul Moham, with a few words, opened the proceedings, and M. Muzaffar Husain and Mr. Zafar Omar, the Official Secretary, followed with speeches emphasizing the need of the proposed institution. Colonel Obaidulla Khan, as Chairman, made the following speech :—

"Gentlemen, It is my pride and privilege to-day to perform the agreeable duty of opening this school in fulfilment of Her Highness' command. You are all aware of the great interest which Her Highness takes in educational matters generally, and female education in particular. This is not the first institution which she has established for the benefit of the female population of her State. The Sultania Girls' school, too, is a result of the endeavours made by Her Highness in this field. Her Highness would have much liked to be here to-day, and greatly regrets her inability to be present owing to slight indisposition. I now declare the school open, and trust that it will justify our hopes and prove a useful institution.

The object of the school is to help the poor and helpless widows to acquire what will afford some relief to them in their misery. I hope you will all take a keen interest in the management of the institution and work for its prosperity."

Sweetmeats, *itr* and *pan* were then distributed, and the meeting came to a close. Although honorary workers were appointed to look after the school, I have considerably myself been personally responsible for its supervision. Stipends were granted to those who were admitted to the school, and in Bhopal this is the first instance of an institution being run by public contributions.

THE JUMA MOSQUE, BHOPAL.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MARRIAGE OF SAHEBZADA HAMIDULLA KHAN

IN the year 1905 I decided to perform the marriage of Sahebzada Hamidulla Khan, in order that I may be able to bring up my daughter-in-law according to my own ideals. I do not consider early marriages very desirable either from the medical or social point of view, but the consideration which weighed with me in this particular instance, was the imperative need of imparting to my daughter-in-law a training and education commensurate with the status of my family. Female education being universally neglected among Mussalmans, I had no hopes of finding a girl of good educational qualifications even by the time Hamidulla attained his majority. There being no suitable girl amongst my own relatives whom I could have trained and educated, I was compelled to cast eyes outside my family. After mature consideration I could not think of a better field of observation than the North West Frontier, and had inquiries made amongst families which had won respect and repute by loyalty to the British Government. I spoke on the matter to my friends, Major Daly and Major Manners Smith, and sought their assistance in finding a suitable match for my son amongst such Afghan families of good blood and high social standing, as were also distinguished for their fidelity to the British connec-

tion. Both of them expressed entire agreement with my suggestion, and put themselves in communication with the Chief Commissioner of the North West Frontier Province. The latter kindly obtained for me genealogical tables of several well known Afghan families, and I deputed Captain Mohammad Hasan Khan Qandhari, who had been long in the State and was very well acquainted with the Frontier, to proceed to Peshawar and report to me about the social position of the families in question. I also sent two ladies from my Palace to visit the zenana, and see the girls and their near relatives. The copious reports which soon reached me, put me in possession of all the details that I wanted, and my choice fell upon the family of Shahzada Jahangir.

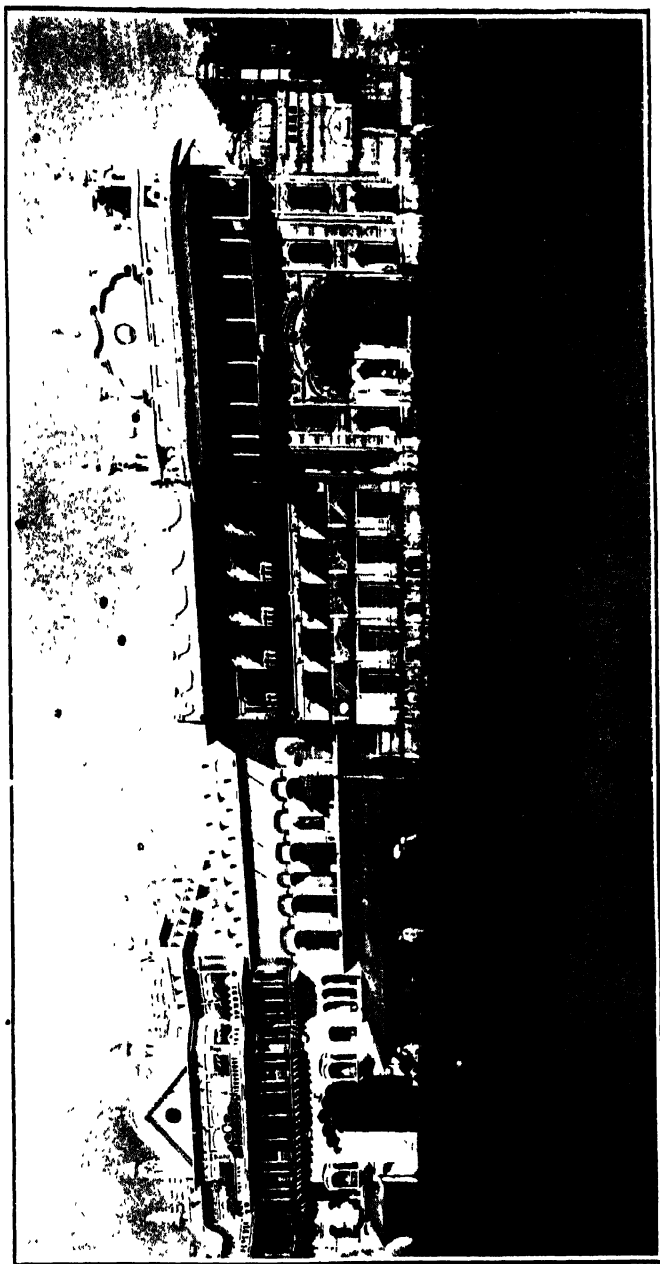
It will not, I believe, be out of place briefly to describe for the benefit of my readers how the tribes are formed among the Afghans. The nomenclature of the tribes usually follows the custom of the family, and descendants of a celebrated personage are, as a rule, collectively named after him. The ruling House of Bhopal springs from the well-known Karar tribe of Afghanistan, and the late Nawab Ehtishamul Mulk's family also belongs to that tribe. But the Karar tribesmen of the Frontier are generally known as Warak-Zai, while the Bhopal family is called Mirazi-Khel, because of Mirazi, the head of the local clan, having gained considerable renown. The family of Nawab Wazir Mohammad Khan was also for some time known by the name of the tribe from which it sprang, but when Wazir Mohammad Khan's indomitable courage won him glory on a hundred battlefields, the family

THE MOTI MAHAL, BHOPAL.

was known as Wazir Khel, an appellation which exists to this day. The sub-divisions of the Warak Zai branch of Jalalabad are in the same way known as Fatma Khel, Jalal Khel, Namdar Khel and Deendar Khel after the celebrities who gained sufficient distinction to give their own names to their clans. My father Nawab Baqi Mohammad Khan belonged to the Mishti Khel, but by reason of his distinction and renown, his family has now adopted the title of Baqi Khel. Similarly the family of Amir Shah Shuja Durrani of Afghanistan, is known as Shahzada Khel, and that of his brother who was his Prime Minister, is called the Wazir Khel. Shahzada Jahangir, to whose granddaughter Hamidulla Khan has been married, is the son of Shahzada Kamran and a grandson of Shah Shuja. Since 1832 this family has been domiciled in India under the benign shadow of the British Government. The story of how the Government espoused the cause of Shah Shuja, makes an interesting chapter of the history of Afghanistan, and it is but natural that the Government should have a lively sympathy with the family ever since Shah Shuja came to India and settled at Jullundhar. His family, too, is on its behalf gratefully appreciative of the favours it has received at the hands of the British Government, and unswerving loyalty is the only possible return for such remarkable generosity.

Shahzada Jahangir served as a Resaldar Major in the Indian Army, and, on retirement, was, in addition to a pension, awarded a valuable plot of land in the Lahore district in recognition of his meritorious services. He has taken up residence at

Peshawar, and has been made an Honorary Magistrate. His son, Shahzada Humayun, the father of Hamidulla's bride, was killed in an encounter with dacoits whom he was endeavouring to capture. The maternal uncle of Shahzada Humayun's widow, Colonel Sir Mohammad Aslam Khan, an Honorary A.D.C. to the King-Emperor, is well-known throughout India. He commanded the Khyber Rifles for some time and has achieved great distinction. He was a guest of the Government in England at the King-Emperor's Coronation, and has also received the title of Nawab. Hamidulla's bride is thus Shahzada Khel on the father's side and Wazir Khel on the mother's side.

A curious incident which occurred about five and twenty years ago, is worth mentioning in connection with Hamidulla Khan's marriage. Shahzada Kamran came to Bhopal in my mother's time and on the recommendation of Major Meade, was first granted a monthly allowance, and later on appointed by Her late Highness to a respectable post in consideration of his family connections. Shahzada Humayun also accompanied his father and was given an appointment in the Military department. His mother was a frequent visitor at the Palace, and my acquaintance with her soon ripened into warm affection. One day I happened to ask her if she had any granddaughters, and if any of them were blessed with children? "Yes," she replied, "one of my granddaughters has two children, one about five and the other three years old." "What a good thing would it be," I remarked, "if one of my sons married into your family, for on the

SHAUKAT MAHAL, BHOPAL.

mother's side my relatives have not been united with any family except their own." "Nothing better than that!" was her prophetic reply. This was a casual conversation, and we soon forgot all about it. Shortly afterwards it so happened that on the death of the first wife of Mian Alamgir Mohammad Khan, my mother wanted him to marry a grand-daughter of Shahzada Kamran. Before assenting to the proposal, the Shahzada's wife came to consult me as to the reply she should give, and inquired about Alamgir Mohammad Khan's lineage. I found myself in a most difficult position by reason of the confidence reposed in me, and since a desire to preserve the purity of a family of high descent had prompted this consultation, I could not, in all conscience, hide anything, and, therefore, told Shahzada Humayun's mother what I knew about the family of Mian Alamgir Mohammad Khan. Her polite refusal of the proposal, however, soon earned the displeasure of Her late Highness, and as Shahzada Kamran perceived it, he decided to leave Bhopal, and having resigned his appointment in the State, took up residence at Delhi for some time. Shortly afterwards Shahzada Kamran died, and his widow settled down in Peshawar. God's will was done: the words uttered in a haphazard sort of way five and twenty years ago, came true, and my youngest son was eventually married in the family of Shahzada Kamran.

Captain Qandhari Khan having found the family willing, I entered into correspondence with the Chief Commissioner of the Province, who wrote me a very gratifying account of the family of Shahzada Jahangir. Thereupon I wrote to the Political

Agent, and a formal proposal was made to Shahzada Jahangir who intimated his consent. This definitely settled the question of Hamidulla Khan's marriage.

On the 17th Jamadius Sani 1323 A. H. arrangements for the marriage festival were taken in hand, and a party consisting of Khan Bahadur Maulvi Nasiruddin, Khan Bahadur Israr Hasan Khan and Munshi Syed Mansab Ali left for Peshawar. The Political Agent kindly gave these officers letters of introduction to the Chief Commissioner and his Chief Secretary, and on arrival at Peshawar the party put up with Mufti Fida Mahomed sahib, Bar-at-Law. The 6th of September was fixed for the *nikah* ceremony. The Mufti sahib rendered invaluable assistance, and two bungalows were rented in the Cantonment for the use of the wedding party. Munshi Israr Hasan Khan's previous acquaintance both with the Cantonment Magistrate and the Assistant Superintendent of Police was very helpful, and his tact and foresight greatly helped forward the arrangements which were well advanced when the wedding party arrived from Bhopal.

The second party consisting of Mian Iqbal Mohammad Khan, Captain Abdul Mabood and Hafiz Abdur Rehman, left for Peshawar by the Punjab Mail on the 26th August 1905, and three days later another party was despatched with jewellery and the bride's trousseau. With this party were also sent the paraphernalia of a marriage festival, *shamianas*, horses, carriages, the bride's palanquin, and various other articles.

Shahryar Dulhan Begam, the wife of Colonel

Obaidulla Khan, was very eager to bring **menhdi* for the bridegroom. Shahryar Dulhan is a daughter of Hamidulla Khan's aunt, and this ceremony is usually performed by cousins or sisters. Other cousins were equally desirous of celebrating this ceremony, but the difficulty was that only a single day could be allotted to it, owing to the wedding party's approaching departure for Peshawar. With a view to save disappointment to everybody, I asked all the aunts and cousins of Hamidulla Khan to bring their *menhdi* together. On the afternoon of the first Rajab the *menhdi* procession started from the Humayun Manzil, and arrived at the Sadar Manzil with the usual *éclat*. In the middle of the procession was a silver throne overhung by an exquisitely embroidered canopy tastefully lit by tiny chandeliers. On the throne was placed a small silver chair with pretty cushions and pillows fastened with elaborate ribbons of cloth of gold. A golden bowl on the throne contained the *menhdi* for the bridegroom. Behind this throne were a number of smaller ones, each brought by a cousin or a near relative of the bridegroom. The twinkling lights of the pretty canopies crowning the array of silver thrones, produced a most striking effect, and the procession presented an interesting sight as it wended its way to the Sadar Manzil.

The members of my family had all assembled at the Sadar Manzil, and soon after the arrival of the procession, Hamidulla Khan was called into the

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* A reddish dye obtained by mixing powdered *henna* leaves with water, and used throughout the East for dyeing the hands and feet of the bride.

zenana. Islam does not permit of men's hands being dyed with *henna*, so the paste is usually spread on the tip of the little finger of the bridegroom's right hand. After this had been done in accordance with the usual custom, the distribution of garlands and *itr* and *pan* took place, and the guests departed.

On the 2nd September the wedding party left for Peshawar by special train, which consisted of the State saloons and a few other carriages. Nawab Nasrulla Khan preferred to stay in Bhopal to supervise the arrangements for the reception of the bride, and with the wedding party went Colonel Obaidulla Khan, Mian Yasin Mohammad Khan, Mian Wilayat Ali Khan, Mian Abdus Samad Khan, Mian Mahmud Ali Khan, Sardar Bahadur Major Mirza Karim Beg, Munshi Ahmad Hasan Khan, Hakim Nurul Hasan, and a few other important State officials.

The train steamed out of Bhopal station at nine in the morning after I had wished God-speed to the bridegroom and Colonel Obaidulla Khan, and arrived at Peshawar on the 4th September. The party were accorded a most cordial reception, and the Chief Commissioner kindly sent a Band and a guard of honour to the station. The party put up in the bungalows rented in the Cantonment, and the *nikah* was performed at the bride's house on the appointed date, Colonel Obaidulla Khan, according to my instructions, taking my place at the ceremony as the bridegroom's guardian. Obaidulla Khan gave a pair of earrings set with valuable rubies as his wedding present to the bride. The remarkable self-control shown on this day by the late Khan Bahadur Maulvi Nasiruddin, the Judicial Minister, deserves

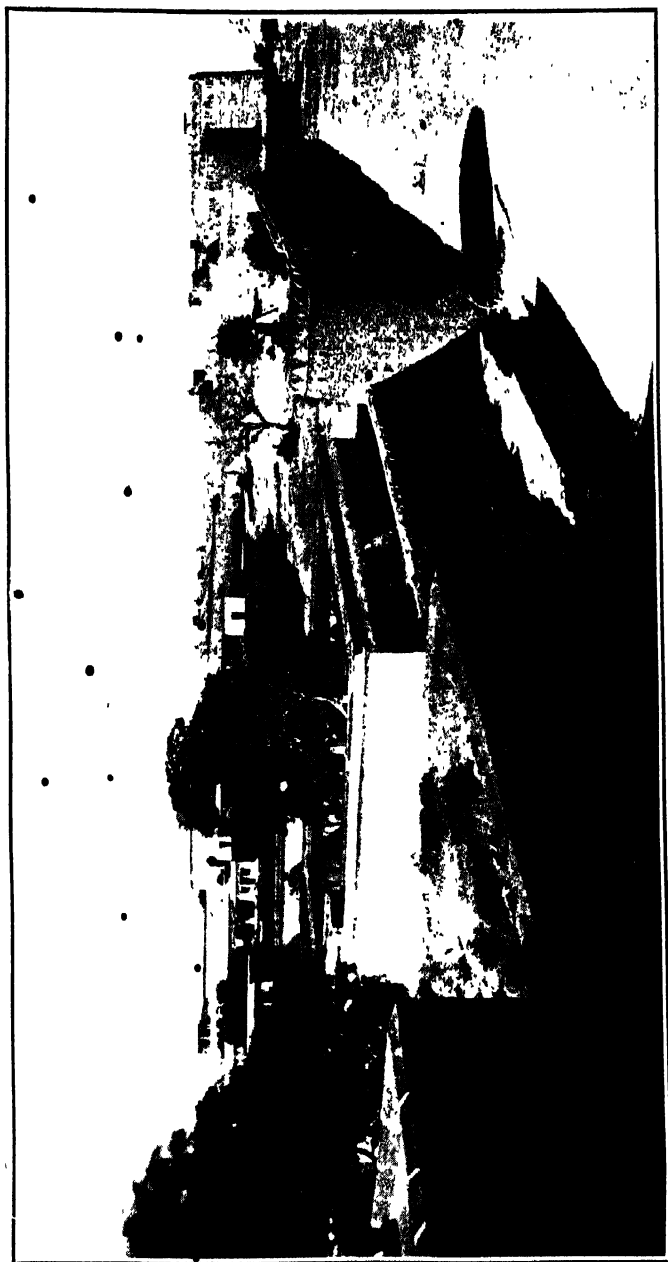
THE BRIDEGROOM AND PARTY AT PESHAWAR.

to be recorded. Just when the wedding party reached Peshawar, he received a telegram informing him of the death of his son, a promising young man who was suddenly cut off in his prime. Moulvi Nasiruddin did not whisper a word about it to anybody, and did not betray the slightest sign of sorrow, lest the melancholy tidings should mar the happiness of the occasion.

The wedding dinner was held the next day, and all the high European officials of the station and members of the Indian aristocracy were invited. A big dinner was given at the bride's house a few days later, and this brought the Peshawar ceremonies to a close.

The wedding party started on their return journey on the 10th Rajab, and reached Sanchi at 10 A. M. on the 11th. I had arranged to meet the party at Sanchi, so a large camp had been pitched there near the Dak bungalow. The Ehtaramia Cavalry, the State Band, my own Bodyguard and the Victoria Lancers were in attendance with the guns of the State Artillery. Mr. Cook, the State Engineer, the Nazims of the Northern and Eastern districts, the Tahsildar of Dewanganj and the City Kotwal had been entrusted with the various arrangements which were all personally supervised by Nawab Nasrulla Khan. I reached Sanchi by special train at 6 o'clock in the morning. On the arrival of the wedding party the guard of honour presented arms, and the Band struck up a suitable tune. The palanquin containing the bride was, according to custom, escorted by the bridegroom on horseback. The bridal couple stayed with me at the Dak bungalow,

and I gave them a diamond ring and a pair of ruby earrings as wedding presents.

We all left Sanchi in the afternoon, and arrived at Bhopal at 5 o'clock. Major and Mrs. Luard, Maulvi Nizamuddin Hasan, the Revenue Minister, together with other officials and nobles of the State met us at the station, and a salute was fired from the Fatehgarh fort. The platform and the waiting room had been gaily decorated with festoons of flowers and bunting, and on alighting from the train I drove straight to the Sadar Manzil where I found a large number of ladies assembled to meet the bride. Qaisar Dulhan and Shahreyar Dulhan were the hostesses, and Mrs. Sculpthorp, the Superintendent of the Bilqisia School, was in charge of reception arrangements in the zenana. At a quarter to seven the procession started from the railway station. The entire roadway had been beautifully illuminated, and five triumphal arches, bearing suitable inscriptions, had been erected as a mark of welcome to the bride on behalf of the city. Two troops of the mounted police and a company of irregulars headed by a band of pipers formed the van of the procession. Then followed a company of the guards of Fatehgarh fort and another of the *Deorhi Khas* Infantry together with detachments of the Intezamia and Ehtaramia troops. After these came the regiment of Victoria Lancers led by a contingent furnished by State Artillery. Behind these were the elephants bearing the *mahi maratib* and a number of richly caparisoned horses. The Ehtaramia Cavalry, led by the State Band and followed by a guard of honour, escorted the bride's

FATEHGARH FORT, BHOPAL.

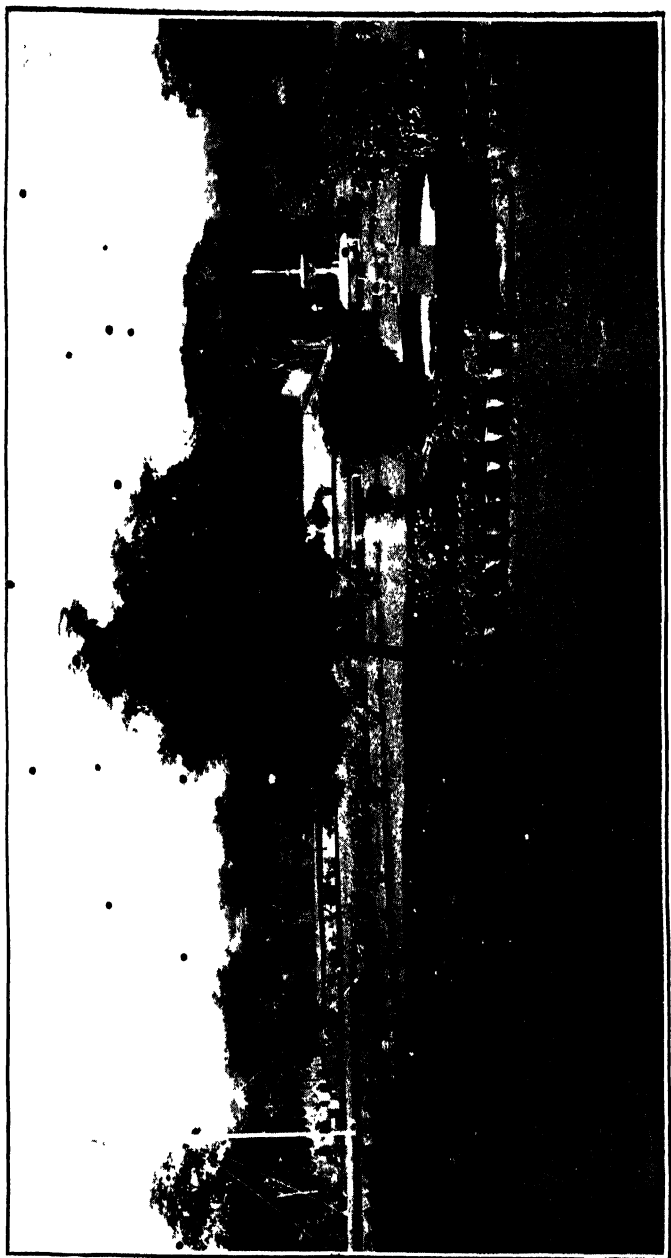
palanquin, and the elephant of the bridegroom which was surrounded by macebearers and attendants. Carriages containing Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Colonel Obaidulla Khan and a number of nobles and high officials, brought up the rear of the procession escorted by a troop of cavalry. The route of the procession was lit by various kinds of fireworks, and flights of rockets and cascades and fountains of brilliant light announced the arrival of the bridegroom's elephant.

On the arrival of the procession at the Sadar Manzil the usual ceremonies were performed, and *pan* was presented to the guests by Birjis Jahan, garlands by the Qaisar Dulhan, and *itr* and sandal by the Shahryar Dulhan. Rs. 1,16,029-12 worth of jewellery was presented to the bride, Mrs. Luard presenting an extremely pretty brooch set with pearls.

The offices and schools observed holiday for two days and on the 14th Rajab the *Valima* dinner was held. On the 22nd, trays full of specially prepared food were sent to the houses of all officials of the State. Munshi Israr Hasan Khan supervised the arrangements, and performed his duties with great industry and honesty. In recognition of his services he was awarded a *khillat* of Rs. 1,000 with the sanction of the Government of India. Four *joras* were sent for the Sharif of Mecca, and all the Secretaries and officials of the State were suitably rewarded. Five hundred *joras* were distributed to the needy and the poor, and copies of the Holy Quran and other sacred books were given away as gifts.

By a happy coincidence the Agent to the Governor-General in Central India at this time was Major Daly, whose father Sir Henry Daly held that office in Central India at the time of my own marriage in 1873. In response to my invitation Major Daly honoured me with a visit on the 14th September. He was received with the usual formalities at the station, and, a few hours later, paid a formal visit to me at the Sadar Manzil. A number of other English guests also arrived in the course of the day, and I invited them all to an afternoon party in the Hayat Afza garden.

The banquet was held in the evening at the Lal Kothi, and after the loyal toasts had been duly honoured, I rose and made the following speech :—

"Hon'ble Major Daly, Ladies and Gentlemen: From the depth of my heart I thank you all for having kindly accepted my invitation, and I assure you that your presence here to-day considerably enhances the joy and happiness of this marriage festival. I regard the presence of Major Daly as a particularly good omen, for it reminds me of the presence of his father, the late Sir Henry Daly, at the celebration of my own marriage here about two and thirty years ago. I am sure you will all join me in the prayer that just as my own marriage proved highly auspicious, so may the life of Hamidulla and his bride be blessed with happyness and prosperity, and on this union be showered God's choicest blessings. Please do not think, because of the bridegroom being so very young, that I favour early marriages. My real object in this particular instance is to supervise the education and training of the little bride personally

GARDEN VIEW, LAL KOTHI.

for education, to my mind, is the best ornament of a woman. On careful consideration the reason which has guided my action in this matter, will, I believe, be found to be entitled to great weight. It was my earnest desire that my family, on this occasion, should be united with old Afghan stock, and that the bride should belong to a family quite as well-known for its loyalty to the British as my own. Through the kind assistance given me by Colonel Deane and Major Manners Smith I have, thank God, found a daughter-in-law after my heart's desire. Hamidulla's bride is closely related to Colonel Sir Aslam Khan, and Shahzada Jahangir, the bride's grand-father, is a highly respectable and prominent citizen of Peshawar whose family has displayed remarkable loyalty and faithfulness to the British Government. I have no doubt that the union of a family, such as this, to my own, will commend itself to you."

After I had sat down, Major Daly proposed the health of the bridal couple in a felicitous speech.

On the 16th September Major Daly visited the Hospital and Asafia School with the Revenue Minister, and, later on, paid a brief visit to the Central Jail accompanied by the Judicial Minister. He also accorded an interview to Shahzada Jahangir and other near relatives of the bride. A military gymkhana and an At Home on the following day brought the celebration to a close. All the European guests and the nobles and high officials of the State were invited to the At Home at the Sadar Manzil. The entire route to the Palace was illuminated, and the guests were, on arrival, conducted to the inner

court. Mrs. Luard kindly played on the piano, and after the bridegroom had also played a few selections, he cut the wedding cake with his sword according to the English custom.

Two centuries have rolled by since Sardar Dost Mohammad Khan left his kith and kin, and founded a principality hundreds of miles away. His posterity has flourished, and the good old tree has sent forth vigorous saplings. For eight generations men have ruled, and after them successive Begams have guided the destinies of the State. I represent the eleventh generation, but this was the first occasion on which a bride from our home in the mountain fastnesses joined my family with pure Afghan blood in her veins. And it was remarkable that both the families which were thus linked, prided themselves on their devotion to the British Crown.

MAJOR AND MRS. DALY.

CHAPTER XX.

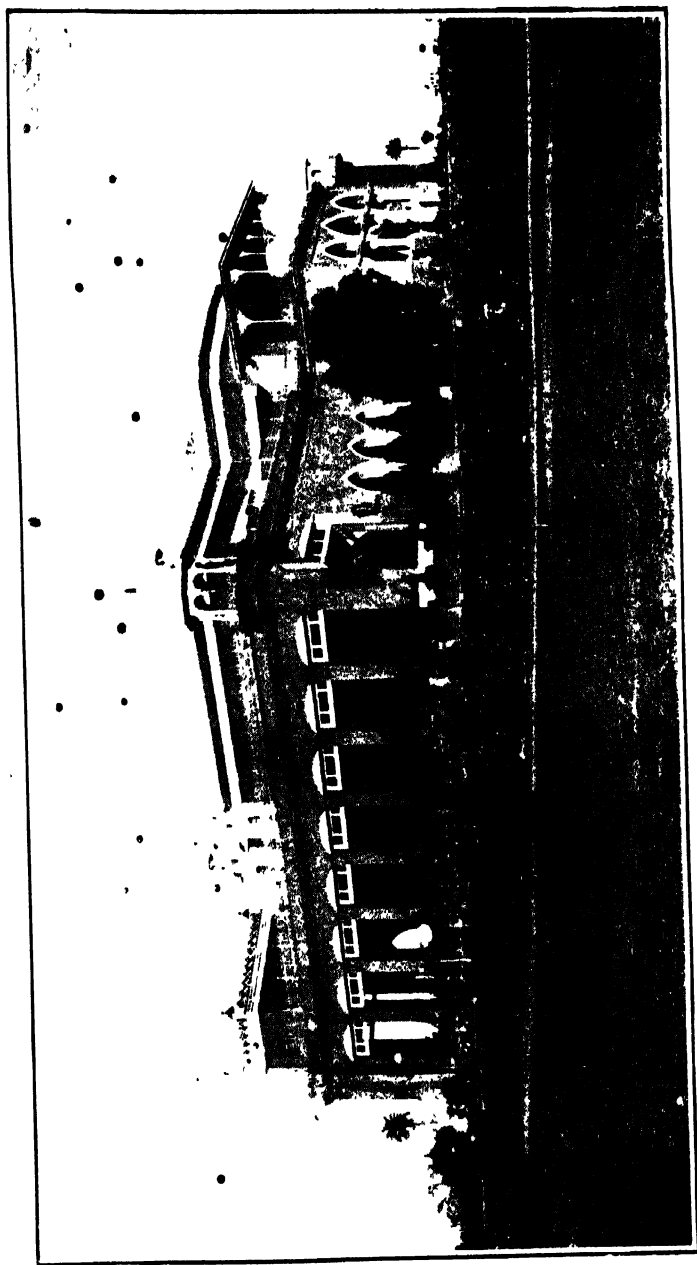
The Fifth Year

The name of Hafiz Muhammad Hasan Khan Bahadur Nasrat Jung, Commander-in-Chief of Bhopal State Forces, has frequently occurred in the previous pages. He saw a very old man, and though somewhat behind the times in military matters, which, under the stress of modern requirements, have developed at a wonderful pace, he possessed the great merits of perfect honesty, unflinching loyalty and a vast experience of local conditions. I, therefore, considered it necessary that he should continue to hold his appointment. But when he passed to his rest in the year 1321 A. H. I had to make a selection for the highly responsible position which he occupied, and which demanded integrity, loyalty and tact of a high order in its incumbent, since it was imperative that the Ruler should be able to repose absolute confidence in the Commander-in-Chief of the Army. In the higher ranks Faridulla Khan, the *Naib Mir Bakhshi*, seemed to me a possible man for the post, but he too laboured under the disadvantage of advancing years, and had reached a stage of life which demanded rest rather than activity.

My keen interest in the affairs of the Military department revealed to me the necessity of having at the head of the Army, some one who was thoroughly responsive to the needs of the times, for I have always been of the opinion that a well trained army

is the best symbol for an Indian State of its loyalty to the Empire. My choice, therefore, ultimately fell on Colonel Obaidulla Khan, and I could not think of a more competent person to undertake the important task of raising the whole Army to the requisite standard of efficiency. He already held the command of the Victoria Lancers, and in order that he might find a wider scope for his talents, I appointed him Commander-in-Chief of the State Forces on the 7th October 1905.

Early in November I paid a visit to Indore to take part in the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Daly College. A camp had been prepared for my party on the Circuit Road, and Major Luard, then the Superintendent of Imperial Gazetteer, had kindly vacated his residence for my use. The Viceroy was to lay the foundation stone himself, but His Excellency's sudden indisposition prevented him from carrying out his intention. Mr. Fraser, the Foreign Secretary, was deputed by the Viceroy to read His Excellency's speech and take his place at the ceremony which was attended by a number of Ruling Princes of Central India and the Agent to the Governor-General. The ceremony was followed by a big garden party in the Residency grounds. All of us greatly missed His Excellency at both the functions.

As Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales were due at Indore a few days later, I stayed on in my camp, and joined the other Princes in extending a cordial welcome to the Royal visitors at Indore station on the 15th November. I was accompanied by Nawab Nasrulla Khan, while

RAHAT MANZIL, AHMEDABAD.

Colonel Obaidulla Khan was on duty outside the station precincts in command of the Royal escort which was furnished by his regiment. His Royal Highness alighted from his special train under a royal salute, and shook hands with all the Princes and Chiefs present on the station platform. Soon afterwards I was presented to the Princess of Wales who asked me if I was the Begam of Bhopal, and conversed with me the while His Royal Highness was inspecting the guard of honour. On the 16th November was held a grand Darbar to which the Indian Princes and high British officials were invited. Owing to the pressure of His Royal Highness' engagements, and out of regard for his health at a time when unusually hot weather was being experienced, His Royal Highness' return visit to the Rulers of Indian States had to be abandoned. The Prince only returned the visit of the Maharaja Holkar, as His Royal Highness was staying in His Highness' territory. A large garden party was held in the afternoon, and His Royal Highness took the opportunity of meeting every Ruling Prince individually. It was the month of Ramazan, and as I was fasting, a separate tent had been pitched to enable me to break my fast in comfort. I was in my tent talking to friends, and my sons stood outside when I saw His Royal Highness accompanied by the Princess of Wales coming in my direction. I rose and advanced to meet the Royal visitors, who, after conversing with me with gracious courtesy, walked away with my sons who were presented to them by Major Daly.

I broke my fast at the time of my evening devotions, and a number of European ladies came to me at the time and had tea with me. The next day I visited the Residency to pay my respects to Their Royal Highnesses. The old relics and works of art which I intended presenting to the Victoria Memorial Hall at Calcutta, had been arranged in the drawing room before my arrival. The Princess of Wales took me to the drawing room, and evinced the keenest interest in all the articles. Her Royal Highness honoured me with a pair of lovely bangles and a copy of her signed photograph.

On the 8th November Her Royal Highness paid a visit to me in camp at eleven o'clock. Major Luard was present, and Hamidulla Khan, who was very young and had not had the honour till then of being presented to the Princess, was also with me. I received Her Royal Highness as she alighted from her carriage, and after the Princess and Mrs. Daly, who accompanied her, were seated in the drawing room which had been very elaborately furnished in oriental style, Major Luard retired, and I unveiled myself and had a long talk with Her Royal Highness. I expressed to the Princess the great delight that I felt at her visit to India, and endeavoured to interpret to her the emotions awakened in the minds of Indian women by her presence in their midst. The Princess told me how immensely she enjoyed meeting Indian ladies. Hamidulla Khan was standing near by with his camera, and Her Royal Highness asked if he was taking a snapshot. "I am just learning, Your Royal Highness," he answered. The Princess remarked

to me that Hamidulla was about the age of her Royal Highness' elder son, and reminded her of him. Then addressing Hamidulla the Princess said "Do take my photograph and send a copy to me." Hamidulla took a snapshot while Her Royal Highness was conversing with me, and another as the Princess was entering her carriage, but the light was very bad, and the photographs developed were, unfortunately, not fit for presentation to Her Royal Highness. I presented to Their Royal Highnesses a few paintings of the views of Bhopal and the Bhadbhada waterfall done by myself, while my daughters-in-law presented pieces of their embroidery work. The Royal visitor did the Sultania school the great honour of accepting a few elaborate cushions which had been prepared by the girls of that institution.

A banquet was held in the Residency in the evening, and was followed by a Royal Chapter of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire. I arrived at the Residency at about 10 o'clock, and, in the room reserved for my use, donned the robe of G.C.I.E. with the help of Mrs. Luard. As soon as dinner was over, Their Royal Highnesses were conducted to the Darbar hall, and Major Luard in company with Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Colonel Obaidulla Khan, came to guide me to the Royal presence. Khadim Hasan Khan, son of Khan Bahadur Israr Hasan Khan, and Abdul Aziz Khan, son of Captain Abdul Qayyum Khan, were my pages, and only a partition separated my room from the Darbar hall. On entering the hall I found the Prince and Princess seated on a throne amid a brilliant company. As I arrived near the throne, I bowed, and Their Royal

Highnesses graciously smiled in acknowledgment. The insignia and the badge of the order were then brought on a velvet cushion, and after I had received them from the hands of His Royal Highness who fastened the insignia to my robe, I bowed again, and retired after saying a few words in expression of my heartfelt gratitude. My place was then taken by the Raja of Sailana, who stepped forward to receive the insignia of K.C.I.E. from His Royal Highness' gracious hands.

On the 19th November, His Royal Highness reviewed the Bhopal Imperial Service Troops who paraded under the command of Colonel Obaidulla Khan. Major Daly, General Beatson, General Grey and members of His Royal Highness' staff were in attendance on the Prince. The Princess and I were together, and the details of the review were graciously explained to me by Her Royal Highness who had a printed copy of the programme in her hand. His Royal Highness was pleased to express great admiration of the soldierly appearance and efficiency of my troops, and inviting Colonel Obaidulla Khan to the Residency the next day, honoured him with a medal as a token of Royal favour.

At four in the afternoon His Royal Highness performed the opening ceremony of the Edward Hall, and in the evening there was a splendid display of fireworks in the garden. Their Royal Highnesses, at this time, bade farewell to all the Ruling Princes, and conversed with me for a considerable time. The feelings awakened by the approaching departure of the Royal visitors seemed to overpower all of us,

and not a few of us wished that Their Royal Highnesses had stayed in India for evermore. Major Luard, at this gathering, gave to Nawab Nasrulla Khan a signed photograph of His Royal Highness. The Royal visitors left for Udaipur the next morning, and I had the honour of presenting a formal *kharita* to them through Sir Walter Lawrence.

Two members of His Royal Highness' staff, Lord Crichton and Sir Derrick Keppel, visited Bhopal as my guests, and it gave me great pleasure to receive them. Lady Crichton and Lady Keppel also arrived, and their presence greatly enhanced my pleasure. They visited the famous Buddhist Topes at Sanchi, and arrangements for their shikar were made in the Eastern district. Shortly after their departure General Beatson telegraphed to me that the Prince of Wales had commanded him to thank me on His Royal Highness' behalf for the hospitality extended to the members of His Royal Highness' staff. "His Royal Highness" he added, "bids a cordial farewell to Your Highness." I wired God-speed to the Prince of Wales at Aden, and, in reply, received the following telegram from His Royal Highness:

"The Princess of Wales and I are greatly touched by your kind telegram of farewell. We are both sorry to leave India."

Colonel Colvin's letter which gave expression to His Royal Highness' appreciation of the Victoria Lancers is worth quoting. He wrote:

"It is with great pleasure that I have to convey to Your Highness the satisfaction expressed by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales with the appearance of the men and horses, and the manner in

which the parade of the Bhopal Victoria Lancers was carried out. I shall be glad if the kind praise of His Royal Highness be conveyed to the Commandant of the Regiment, and to all officers, non-commissioned officers and men serving under him."

Colonel Colvin's letter was published in an Army Order, and the kind words of His Royal Highness' gracious appreciation conveyed to all ranks.

The services of Maulvi Syed Nasiruddin, the Nasir-ul Moham, had been borrowed from the Government of Bengal, but as the climate of Bhopal did not suit him, and his health completely broke down, he expressed a desire for being returned to his province before the termination of the period for which his services had been lent. The question of the appointment of his successor demanded careful thought. Munshi Israr Hasan Khan was then the Assistant Nasirul Moham, and had been in State service for a number of years. He had discharged his duties with ability and integrity as Superintendent of the collection of revenue arrears, and had been promoted to the Assistant Ministership. The latter position, too, is of considerable responsibility, as the Assistant has to help his chief in all important matters with advice, and has to supervise the work of subordinate courts. Israr Hasan Khan's work was well spoken of by Maulvi Syed Nasiruddin, and his diligence and honesty were proofs of his solicitude for the interests of the State, and of his fitness for a higher appointment. The services which his family rendered to the British Government in the dark days of the Mutiny, were

also a strong recommendation in his favour. There was thus ample justification for my appointing him Nasirul Moham, and giving him the post which he richly deserved. This, in my opinion, was a more desirable step than getting somebody from outside whom it would have taken years to gain experience of local conditions. Munshi Israr Hasan Khan took over charge of the office of Nasirul Moham on the 16th September 1905.

Rainfall is now the main source of water-supply in Bhopal, for the wells and other means of irrigation which existed in the past, have suffered badly in consequence of the maladministration that was rife in the days of absolute ministry. After the completion of twenty years' settlement which was carried out under the orders of Her late Highness, the Ministers seem to have followed a policy of drift. Munshi Imtiaz Ali Khan, during his term of office, completed the resettlement of only four tahsils, and things were in train for the resettlement of the other tahsils, when a change of ministry occurred. Maulvi Abdul Jabbar Khan, the new Minister, instead of pushing the new settlement to completion on the existing basis, decided to extend the term of the settlement to thirty years, with the result that there was dissatisfaction among the people, and ultimately chaos. On the top of all this came successive famines, which added both to the difficulties of the administration and the distress of the people. Not infrequently the *mustajirs* themselves destroy the means of irrigation when a new settlement is under contemplation, in order that the capacity of the soil may be estimated much

less than it really is. The uncertainty of the situation, and the consequent crop of rumours as to the period of the new settlement, had a most detrimental effect on the artificial sources of water-supply. In the Western district especially great damage was done, but misdeeds often recoil upon the heads of their perpetrators, and the *mustajirs* who foolishly allowed themselves to be tempted into evil ways, injured only themeslves in the long run. During the year under review, the measures taken by the Revenue department under my direction to remedy the existing state of affairs, were greatly hampered by deficient rainfall: it was, therefore, all the more creditable for the administration to have succeeded in bringing some thirty thousand bighas of fallow land under the plough. A large portion of the State territory is hilly country, and the Nerbada is the only big river which offers a prospect of the resources of the State in respect of irrigation being developed. I devoted most careful attention to the problem, and established a distinct permanent department to meet the needs of the State in the matter of irrigation, and submit for my consideration projects prepared under expert advice. . . .

Certain taxes on the farmers were, in my opinion, an unnecessary and unbearable burden. Important remissions were, therefore, sanctioned with a view to improve the condition of cultivators materially. Ever since I assumed control of affairs, I contemplated remitting the weighing dues and the internal octroi duty, both of which I considered very irksome to the people. In the year under review, Maulvi Nizamuddin Hasan, the Moinul

Moham, formally recommended the abolition of these undesirable duties. The necessary sanction was accorded by me on the occasion of Hamidulla Khan's marriage, and the outstanding arrears under this head were also remitted. The people were greatly appreciative of this concession, and the peasantry particularly have derived great advantage from the cancellation of these imposts which were, most undoubtedly, a hindrance to trade. Two new taxes, *viz.*, the house tax and the income tax, were, however, imposed in the limits of Bhopal city in the course of the year. This was done because of the City Municipality having become a drain on the State treasury. The expenses of the Municipality this year amounted to Rs. 42,740-9-6, whereas its income under all heads was only Rs. 7,096-11-9. The expenditure was growing considerably, and successive plague epidemics had rendered the introduction of costly measures of general sanitation absolutely necessary. The situation called for an increase in the yearly income of the Municipality, and the need was met by a small monthly tax being imposed on houses of the value of Rs. 5,000 and more. In regard to the income tax, Rs. 1,000 a year was regarded as the minimum taxable income.

At the time when public roads were first constructed in the districts, Nawab Sikandar Begam had levied a road tax and a few other dues on account of the extraordinary expenditure which the State was then called upon to meet, but all these dues were abolished on Her late Highness' accession. Suggestions in respect of the re-imposition of these

were made to me, but I could not see my way to accept them.

The Excise department needed to be completely overhauled. In my mother's time the work of this department was supervised by the Naib Vazir. I kept up the arrangement, and the Assistant Moinul Moham continued in charge of the Excise administration. This year the Central Provinces Administration appointed Mr. Todhunter to re-organise their Excise department upon the most modern lines, and since the districts of Hoshangabad and Saugor touched Bhopal territory, and the question of the liquor shops on the border line was a prolific source of complaints on either side, I lost no time in consulting Mr. Todhunter, and Moulvi Nizamuddin Hasan and Syed Qudrat Ali were deputed to ascertain the views of the Central Provinces Administration. A satisfactory settlement was soon reached, and a neutral zone of two miles was created on the boundaries of Bhopal and the Hoshangabad and Saugor districts. Previous to my accession there was a liquor shop in almost every village. This system was abolished, and a shop per radius of five miles was sanctioned.

The *jagirdars* of the State hitherto controlled their own excise, but finding that they frequently exceeded the limits imposed in their sanads, and thus caused considerable losses to the State, all rights under this head were assumed by the State, and exercised henceforward by the Excise department. This led to new rules and regulations being framed with great care and forethought, and the department was placed under a special

officer as an independent charge. Care was also taken that the consumption of liquor and intoxicating drugs was discouraged as far as possible. It is a matter of no little pride and satisfaction to me that my Mussulman subjects are, as a rule, good Mussalmans, and do not touch wine. Only the non-Muslims, whose religion permits them to do so, are the chief consumers.

In spite of the various remissions and concessions sanctioned in the course of the year, the returns showed a considerable increase in the year's receipts. The total income in the fourth year of my administration was 25 lakhs, and in the fifth year an improvement of 5 lakhs was recorded. The total expenditure in the fourth year balanced the year's income, while the next year the budget estimates showed a surplus of three lakhs. The expenditure, it is true, was growing from year to year, but the situation, all things considered, was entirely satisfactory. Sound finance being the foundation of all administrative progress, it was vitally important that the administration should pay its way; hence the determined endeavour which I made to restore financial prosperity.

The question of revenue settlement had proved the most fruitful source of troubles. Therefore, even before the termination of the five years' settlement I took time by the forelock and began to formulate plans for a new settlement. Mr. Hoare, then Settlement Officer at Indore, was an intimate friend of Israr Hasan Khan and a great authority on all matters connected with revenue settlement. I invited him to Bhopal, and, after studying local

conditions, he expressed the opinion that although a *kashtkari* settlement was far preferable to the *mustajiri* system, yet, in consequence of successive famines and the reduction of cultivated area, it was very necessary to continue the *mustajiri* system for the present. Only in the Peklon *parganah* of Diwanganj tahsil a settlement was made direct with the farmers as a tentative measure.

The question of the collection of outstanding arrears of revenue bristled with difficulties. The records were unreliable, and this made matters worse. In the course of the tour which I undertook in the Southern and Eastern districts, I had used every endeavour to effect some improvement, and the seriousness of the problem that faced me can be judged from the fact that in the Western district alone the outstandings exceeded 28 lakhs, while the figures for the whole State reached about 60. Most of the defaulters had either died or absconded, or were reduced to circumstances which precluded the possibility of the smallest recovery from them. Even in the case of those who could meet their liabilities, I gave orders for a number of concessions being granted, and the payment was spread over a long period to make easy instalments possible. On the return of Maulvi Abdul Hamid, the Settlement Officer, to his province, the services of Munshi Mohammad Yaqub were obtained from the Central Provinces Administration, and when the latter's period of service expired, the services of Maulvi Zainuddin, M.A., a Deputy Collector in the United Provinces, were obtained on the Moinul Moham's suggestion.

The two divisions of the Forest department, known as Preserved and Unpreserved area, were combined, and the united whole placed under a Forest Officer who was assisted with a large staff to carry out survey and delimitation operations.

Sufficient funds were allotted for the maintenance of public roads and hospitals. The popularity of the Unani system of medicine was very remarkable. The chief hospital of the city was visited by the Agent to the Governor-General and the Agency Surgeon, both of whom expressed themselves highly gratified by the visit. Two new dispensaries were opened in the districts—one at Peklor, and one at Nazirabad. The work of the Lady Lansdowne Hospital, under the guidance of Miss Blong, was highly satisfactory, and the popularity of this institution increased remarkably in the course of the year. I visited this hospital personally, and sanctioned an extension of the buildings. Sanitary officers were posted in all districts. Two new hospitals were opened in the Southern and Eastern districts, and competent staffs provided. Small pox and plague again visited the State, but the epidemics, by God's grace, soon subsided, and the percentage of mortality was not so high as in previous years. Vaccination and inoculation were recommended to the people, and though old prejudices die hard, indications were yet visible of the increasing popularity of these measures.

The returns of the Education Department, too, showed improvement. The total number of students on the rolls of the various schools was 3,336 boys

and 259 girls. This showed a slight increase as compared with the returns of the previous year. The Sulaimania school was affiliated to the Oriental Faculty of the Punjab University, and the candidates who passed out of the institution were given employment by the State. The Theology branch of the Sulaimania school was organised as a distinct institution under the name of Waqfia school. I was particularly glad to learn that the educationists of Aligarh had given earnest attention to the problem of female education, and proposed starting a Normal school. A monthly grant-in-aid was immediately sanctioned by me for the proposed institution. Shaikh Abdulla, the Secretary of the female education section of the Mohammadan Educational Conference, came up to Bhopal and sought an interview with me. I thoroughly discussed with him the question of female education in all its aspects. He told me that a Female Art Exhibition was shortly to be held under the auspices of the Educational Conference at Aligarh, and it gave me great pleasure to send to the Exhibition my own painting of the tomb of Faiz Bahadur, and a few specimens of the needlework of the girls of Sultania and Victoria schools. These won silver medals at the Exhibition.

Mr. C. H. Payne, M.A., was appointed Principal of the Alexandra school, and an efficient staff was provided for the institution. The school started with thirty students, and soon made considerable progress.

Nawab Sikandar Begam had divided the State into three districts which consisted of thirty tahsils,

but Nawab Shah Jahan Begam had reduced the number of tahsils to twenty-one. Eventually Her late Highness had to increase both the number of the districts and the tahsils. I found that these divisions did not follow any particular line of policy, and, in some cases, sub-montane areas had been placed under headquarters situated on the other side of the hills. Geographical considerations being of considerable importance in such divisions, I went into the whole matter most carefully, and the State territory was divided into districts and tahsils in pursuance of a distinct policy which was thoroughly understood by the officials of the Revenue department.

His Royal Highness the Landgraf of Hesse visited India in the autumn of 1906, and arrived at Bhopal from Hyderabad (Deccan) on the 21st November. As His Royal Highness was very closely related to the family of the King-Emperor, I entertained him in a manner befitting his position. The Moinul Moham and Nasirul Moham received him at the station with the usual formalities, and a guard of honour was drawn up on the platform. A salute was fired from the Fatehgarh fort as His Royal Highness alighted from his saloon, and the party were escorted to the Lal Kothi by a squadron of Victoria Lancers.

At four in the afternoon His Royal Highness, with his Staff and the Political Agent, paid a formal visit to me at the Sadar Manzil. My sons and a few high officials of the State were present, and the Landgraf was received at the steps of the Palace by Colonel Obaidulla Khan, Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Sahib-

zada Hamidulla Khan meeting him in the inner court. After he had sat down, His Royal Highness thanked me for the hospitality extended to him by the State, and said that the beautiful landscape and the splendid panorama of Bhopal had been a pleasant surprise for him. His Royal Highness again visited me at Ahmedabad Palace, and greatly admired the lovely views of natural scenery obtainable from Palace grounds. I paid a return visit to the Landgraf the next day, and in the evening he visited the city Palaces, the Hayat Afza garden, the Fatehgarh fort, the Juma Masjid, Moti Masjid, and other places of interest. For a member of His Royal Highness' staff, who was a baron of the German Empire, a shoot was arranged in the Dewanganj tahsil. A State banquet was held at the Lal Kothi in honour of my distinguished guest, and on the 24th, the Landgraf reviewed the Victoria Lancers. The elephants bearing the *mahi maratib* interested His Royal Highness immensely. A military gymkhana was held in the afternoon, and the following morning His Royal Highness left for Delhi after a visit to the famous archæological remains at Sanchi.

His Royal Highness suffered from defective sight in consequence of an affection of the eyes, and this made him entirely dependent on a large glass which he always carried in his pocket. He was extremely kind and courteous, and spoke excellent English. I presented him with a painting of a bit of beautiful scenery in Bhopal, and the Landgraf gave his signed photographs to Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Colonel

BHOPAL CITY AND LAKE.

Obaidulla Khan. He presented a splendid pair of binoculars to Sahibzada Hamidulla Khan.

A member of His Royal Highness' staff was greatly enamoured of the carpets manufactured in the State Jail, and expressed a wish to purchase two or three samples. It is true that these carpets cannot for a moment be compared with those made in Germany in point of workmanship and beauty of design, but the fact that the carpets were appreciated by a connoisseur, is an indication of the progress made in a short space of time by the State Jail which, only a few years previously, could not turn out even decent blankets.

Reference has been made in the previous pages to the appointment of Colonel Obaidulla Khan as Commander-in-Chief of the State Forces. His energy and industry soon produced excellent results, and in December 1906 I learnt with profound gratification that Lord Minto had appointed Obaidulla Khan his A.D.C. This appointment was a great honour to the ruling family of Bhopal, and was all the more welcome because it indicated the fulfilment of the expectations I entertained at the time of Obaidulla Khan's adoption of a military career.

On the 2nd Zilhaj 1324 A. H. Colonel Obaidulla Khan was blessed with a second son. The usual ceremonies were observed, and at the *aqiqa* which was held on the seventh day, I chose the name Saiduz Zafar Khan for the new member of my family.

CHAPTER XXI

THE AGRA DURBAR—MEETING WITH HIS MAJESTY THE AMIR

EARLY in December 1906 I received a *kharita* from His Excellency the Viceroy, inviting me to an investiture Darbar at Agra. I accepted the invitation, and the camp arrangements were soon taken in hand. With the assistance of the Foreign department a suitable house was rented near the Agra fort, and in its spacious grounds a camp was laid out for the large retinue which was to accompany me. My Bodyguard Cavalry, a detachment of Victoria Lancers and a contingent of State Infantry were detailed for service at Agra.

On the 6th January 1907, I left Bhopal by special train, and reached Agra the next morning. All my sons, both the Ministers, Sardar Bahadur Major Karim Beg, M. Abdur Rauf Khan and other members of my staff accompanied me. The Political Agent and Mr. and Mrs. Bayley also joined me at Bhopal. Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Sahibzada Hamidulla Khan stayed with me, while Colonel Obaidulla Khan took up residence in the Viceregal camp in the capacity of an A.D.C. to the Viceroy.

The Viceroy arrived on the 8th January. Accompanied by my sons and the Ministers, I motored to the station which presented a gay appearance smothered in flags and bunting. All the Ruling Princes and Chiefs then in Agra, and the high

OBAIDULLA KHAN AND HAMIDULLA KHAN.

officials of the British Government were present on the platform. His Excellency was received with the usual formalities, and after exchanging greetings with all of us and inspecting the guard of honour, drove to the Circuit House. Shortly afterwards the Viceroy received the visits of the Ruling Princes, and, at the appointed time I arrived at Viceregal camp accompanied by Nawab Nasrulla Khan, Sahibzada Hamidulla Khan, the Moinul Moham, the Nasiiul Moham Sardar Bahadur Major Karim Beg, Mian Iqbal Mohammad Khan, Munshi Abdur Rauf Khan, and Mr. Zafar Omar, the official Secretary. Colonel Obaidulla Khan, as Viceroy's A.D.C., received me as I alighted from my carriage. His Excellency paid a return visit to me at my camp the following day. The usual formalities were observed, and my sons and the leading officials of the State had the honour of presenting *nazar* to His Excellency in token of fealty.

On the 10th January I paid a formal visit to the Countess of Minto. Mrs. Bayley accompanied me, and I had the pleasure of a long and extremely interesting conversation with Her Excellency.

A large garden party was held in the grounds of the Circuit house in the afternoon, and the Ruling Princes and important members of their staffs were invited. The beautiful garden provided an excellent background for the brilliant company. As I contemplated the scene from my coign of vantage, a slight stir soon caught my eye, and the whole assembly seemed to turn towards the main entrance to the grounds. "It is the Amir", somebody whispered,

and soon afterwards, Major Manners Smith came up to me, and said "His Majesty the Amir would very much like to see Your Highness." 'Yes I should be delighted,' I answered, but hardly had I uttered these words, when I saw His Majesty himself coming in my direction. I advanced to meet him, and after we had exchanged greetings in the orthodox Mussulman way, His Majesty inquired after my health in Pushtu. "Alhamd-o-Lillah," (Praise be to God) I replied "I am well and strong." His Majesty then spoke in Persian, and said "Your reputation has reached the wilds of Central Asia, and the newspapers have kept me informed of your doings." "It is due to the protection afforded by the British Government," I answered, "that an Afghan woman can rule a State in peace and security hundreds of miles away from her ancestral home." "Quite true, Quite true", remarked the Amir, "but not every fruit has the flavour of the fig, and not every woman the brilliance of Zubaida." Then the talk turned to other topics, and, after a brief conversation, His Majesty mixed with the company, and I passed on to my delightful friends, the daughters of the Viceroy. I suddenly caught sight of the Viceroy's youngest son, a dear little boy of about 8 years: I took hold of him playfully, and asked him if he knew who I was. The unexpected question seemed to stagger him, and his sweet face, as he attempted to solve the difficulty, presented a lovely picture. "Your family", I told the little one as I released him, "has long been associated with India, and perhaps you may also come to India some day as Viceroy." "Thank you very

LORD AND LADY MINTO WITH HER HIGHNESS' GRANDSONS

much", was the little one's answer as he ran away.

Lady Minto paid me a return visit on the 11th January, and I had another very interesting conversation with her. Her Excellency asked me to write my name in a pretty little album that she had brought, and as signatures were entered in it under the month of one's birth, I signed my name under July. Her Excellency smiled, and said that the month of my birth coincided with that of His Excellency. In the afternoon Lord and Lady Minto sent for me some lovely flowers which were a delightful feast of scent and colour.

On the 12th January a Chapter of the Indian Orders was held in the Diwan-i-Am of the Agra fort. His Majesty the Amir was, on this occasion, invested with the insignia of G. C. B. by the Viceroy. I met the Amir again at the party in the Diwan-i-Khas, and bade His Majesty farewell, as this was our last meeting.

A review of all the British forces present was held at Agra. Lord Kitchener himself led the troops past the saluting base, and everybody from the Commander-in-Chief down to the humblest soldier seemed to be a living picture of military efficiency.

CHAPTER XXII

THE SIXTH YEAR

I TOURED the Southern district in the cold weather, and my first stop was at Budhni. Its pleasant situation on the Nerbada river, and the hopes of its soon becoming an important centre of economic development, influenced me to make it the headquarters of the Shahganj tahsil, and the necessary orders for the construction of offices and other buildings were immediately issued. In the course of the tour I gave a great deal of time and attention to the question of revenue arrears, and the policy of rewarding the *mustajirs* who had met their liabilities, produced satisfactory results. Nawab Nasrulla Khan, too, was out on tour, and submitted detailed reports to me from the important places which I was unable to visit.

On the completion of the period for which Maulvi Nizamuddin Hasan's services had been lent, I moved the Government of Bengal to lend me again the services of Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed Nasiruddin whose health had, in the meanwhile, been completely restored. He took over charge of the Moinul Moham's office on the 22nd Rajab 1324 A. H.

Settlement operations were commenced in the Eastern district under the personal direction of Syed Zainuddin, and it was finally decided that the new settlement throughout the State should be

for a term of 19 years. Measures were also taken for the rehabilitation of the position of cultivators who had frequently suffered at the hands of *mustajirs* in the past, in consequence of the ill-conceived and ill-carried-out policies of the Revenue department. The *ryotwari* system of settlement proposed by Maulvi Nizamuddin Hasan was not adopted, but the advantages of that system were kept in view when the details of the new system were worked out, and care was taken to eliminate the disadvantages.

The Legislative Council was instructed to adopt, *mutatis mutandis*, those laws and rules of British India which suited local conditions. Most of the existing rules and regulations of the State have been framed in pursuance of these instructions, and this has entailed a good deal of translation from English into Urdu which is the court language of the State. Maulvi Syed Nasiruddin, the new Moinul Moham, was, by reason of his excellent command of both English and Urdu, an ideal man to ensure the correctness of the Urdu adaptations. The services of Maulvi Abdul Ghafur, B.A., a translator under the Government of the United Provinces, were obtained on loan, and the work of the Legislative Council was placed on a sound basis under his direction. This important work has not only had excellent immediate effects on the administrative progress of the State, it has also resulted in a remarkably useful addition to the Urdu literature on the subject.

The Mounted Police of the State was placed under a special officer who was designated Chief Inspector,

and facilities were provided for the men of the unit being properly trained.

Attention was paid to the stamps of the State. After the size and quality of the paper had been approved, sanction was accorded to a suitable design, and a sufficient supply ordered from an English firm.

The telephone system of communication was introduced in Bhopal, and a Central Exchange opened in the Sadar Manzil with connections in all important offices.

A number of weaving machines were installed in the Central Jail, and a Committee established under the presidency of the Moinul Moham, to advise upon the industrial and economic development of the State.

Signs of improvement were visible in the administration of the Forest department, and for the first time the year's figures showed a surplus, inspite of the expenditure having nearly doubled on account of the reforms introduced. With a view to secure expert guidance of the department, the services of Mr. Narasingha Rao were borrowed from the Central Provinces Administration.

Improvement of communications was also an urgent problem. The estimates prepared by the Public Works department for the construction of metalled roads connecting the capital with all tahsils totalled about 8 lakhs. A lakh of rupees was sanctioned for immediate construction, and the work was put in hand.

With the assistance of Mr. Marsh, who had been appointed by the Government of India to

HER HIGHNESS THE BEGAM WITH HER SONS AND GRANDCHILDREN.

advise the Central Indian States upon matters connected with irrigation, the resources of the State were surveyed, and the projects for the utilization of the waters of the Parbeti, Ajnal and Parwa rivers by means of canals, were taken into careful consideration. The finances of the State did not admit of all the projects being sanctioned straightaway, so only such work was commenced as could be carried to completion. Certain old reservoirs and dams were thoroughly repaired.

The re-organisation of the Audit and Accounts department was also very necessary. The methods of verification and the processes of audit hitherto followed in the *Daftar-i-Hazur*, were so dilatory and complex, that they only served to make confusion worse confounded, and the accounts of the various spending departments remained unadjusted for years. As a modern system of accounts was badly needed, the existing methods of book-keeping were altered root and branch, and the whole office overhauled from top to bottom under the direction of Munshi Oudh Narayan Bisarya, a highly efficient man in accounts, who achieved remarkable success in a short space of time, and whose budgets and audit statements, prepared on up-to-date lines, were gratifying evidences of a new order of things.

A special school was opened this year for the benefit of the Hindu girls, whose claims on my attention were quite as insistent as those of their Mussalman sisters. The religious needs of Hindus being entirely different from those of the Mussalmans, and education divorced from religion being a thing of no value

in my eyes, I considered it necessary to establish an independent institution to meet the needs of the Hindu community. The school was named Birjisia Kania Patshala, and the opening ceremony performed by me personally on the 15th June 1907.

The annual prize distribution of the Sultania Girls' school was held this year on the 14th August at the Sadar Manzil Palace. At that stage the institution was in need of special encouragement, and the ceremony and circumstance with which this particular occasion was invested produced the desired effect. The main hall of the Sadar Manzil presented a gorgeous appearance, and the effect was considerably enhanced by elaborate decorations which followed an appropriate scheme of colour. Refreshments had been arranged in the side galleries, and the usually quiet inner court was alive with the presence of a large number of girl students and women of all classes. Some ladies of my family had pressed me to don the robe of G.C.I.E. on this occasion, and urged the plea that my own people had never seen me in it. I complied with the request, and thus added another item of interest to the assembly. The annual report of the school was an interesting record of pioneer work, done thoughtfully and well, and was listened to with great interest. My own speech was then read out by Fatima Begam, and was followed by the distribution of prizes to successful girls, whose demeanour, as they came up to me to take the coveted things from my hands, indicated an excellent state of discipline and good manners.

NAWABZADA HAMIDULLA KHAN.

Plague again made its unwelcome appearance in the State in the course of the year, and disinfection, inoculation, and evacuation of infected localities were resorted to in the light of the lessons learnt in the previous outbreaks. The scourge swept over a large part of the Indian continent, and levied a terrible toll of human life. The havoc wrought by this fell disease moved the heart of the King-Emperor who sent a gracious message of sympathy which made a touching appeal to the people in their distress. I caused the Royal message to be published broadcast in my territory, and added to it a few appropriate words on my own behalf. All my officials did their best, and no means were spared to afford adequate medical relief. With a view to encourage inoculation, I took the extraordinary step of collecting at the Sadar Manzil all boys attending the city schools, and the words of motherly advice in which I adedressed them, succeeded in persuading all of them to submit to inoculation. With the Royal message the Government of India published the results of operations conducted to combat the spread of the disease, and profitting by the lessons learnt in British India, I gave orders for the endeavours of the State being conducted on right lines, and with due regard to the recommendations made by British authorities in the light of their vast experience. When, by God's mercy, the epidemic subsided, I took the opportunity of communicating to the Government of India the results indicated by experience in my own territory. Human effort, it is true, cannot entirely avert a calamity due to causes over which it has no control, but it can go

a considerable way towards mitigating the dreadful effects and alleviating the attendant misery.

On the 27th November 1907 was born the third son of Colonel Obaidulla Khan. I was not present at the time in the Jahan Numa Palace, as I was expecting a visit from Colonel Daly at Ahmedabad, and Nawab Nasrulla Khan and Colonel Obaidulla Khan were also with me. I had sent Hamidulla Khan to the Jahan Numa Palace, and asked him to let us know on the telephone about the happy event. Colonel Daly arrived at Ahmedabad at 11 A.M. and stayed to lunch. As soon as he left for the Lal Kothi, a telephone message was received from Hamidulla Khan announcing the birth of a son in his brother's house. Shahryar Dulhan unfortunately fell seriously ill shortly afterwards, and a specialist lady doctor had to be summoned from Bombay. Skilful treatment and careful nursing, however, restored her to complete health, and on her recovery, the usual ceremonies were observed, and I chose the name Rashiduz Zafar Khan for the newborn.

I had started the Alexandra High school with the notion of following the curriculum of one of the Chiefs' Colleges in British India. But this idea had to be abandoned eventually, since those who sent their boys to the institution were bent upon a University curriculum being adopted, in order that the lads might prepare for University examinations and join colleges afterwards. To this point of view practical experience has brought me round, and I am now one of those who think that, all things consider-

GENERAL OBAIDULLA KHAN'S CHILDREN.

ed, the course of study prescribed by an Indian University is by far the best for the boys of the classes represented in the Alexandra school. What I have consistently been opposed to, is the practice, almost universal in the country, of boys of all classes and of all stations in life going up for what is purely a literary education of a uniform type. This provision of mental fare of a particular kind for the industrial, the agricultural, and the leisured classes, without regard for the varying needs, of the different grades of society, has naturally had some unwholesome effects, and the malaise which of late years has crept over our educational institutions, can be traced to this want of special provision for the special needs of the various classes. The Universities have succeeded in turning out a goodly supply of graduates of a particular brand, but these poor graduates are fast becoming a drug in the market, and the demand being far short of the supply, and the avenues to industrial development not even adequately explored, it is hardly surprising that discontent exists, and even the peace and security of the land are occasionally menaced. And not until agriculture and industries are thoroughly developed, and institutions established on foundations well and truly laid for the attainment of industrial and economic progress, will these signs of discontent disappear. For my own State I considered it necessary to run the Alexandra school on the lines of a first class University institution, so I had it affiliated to the Allahabad University, and took steps to provide a suitable staff, such as could translate my ideas on education into solid useful action.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE SEVENTH YEAR—LORD KITCHENER'S VISIT

EARLY in 1908 I invited Lord Kitchener to visit Bhopal, and was informed by the Political Agent in reply that it gave His Excellency great pleasure to accept my invitation. The Political Agent added that His Excellency was keenly looking forward to his visit to my capital, and particularly to seeing the Victoria Lancers under the command of General Obaidulla Khan. Nearly twenty years had elapsed since Bhopal last received a visit from the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in India. Lord Roberts' visit to the State in 1889 has been referred to in previous pages, but what a change had been effected by the years that had rolled by! I was particularly desirous after the appointment of General Obaidulla Khan to the command of State troops, that the greatest military authority in the land, who also happened to be one of the most distinguished figures of modern history, should see my Army, and favour me with his expert opinion about it.

Lord Kitchener arrived at Bhopal on the 5th April 1908. His Excellency's arrival was private, but I met him at the station with my sons and Ministers. The next day formal visits were exchanged, and, in the afternoon, the Fatehgarh fort, the Hayat Afza garden, and the lines of Imperial Service Troops were visited by my distinguished guest.

EARL KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM.

On the morning of the 7th April, His Excellency reviewed my troops, and immediately afterwards motored to Sehore to inspect the battalion stationed there. Returning to Bhopal in the afternoon, Lord Kitchener was present at a military gymkhana held on the Jahangirabad parade ground. A State banquet was held in the evening at the Lal Kothi, and after the toast of His Majesty's health had been duly honoured, I rose to propose that of my illustrious guest, which I did in the following words :—

"Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hardly know how to thank His Excellency for the honour he has done me by kindly accepting my invitation. That a long journey in this weather must have been none too comfortable, is only too obvious, but His Excellency's presence here as my guest, and the fact of his having reviewed my troops, will for long be memories cherished with pride in the annals of my family.

It is my earnest desire that my troops should be vouchsafed an opportunity of serving the Empire. For this purpose unremitting attention has been given to the completion of mobilization arrangements, so that the troops may be ready at a moment's notice to take the field when the call comes. I am using every endeavour to raise all my troops to a high state of efficiency, in order that my military resources may, in time of need, be placed at the disposal of the British Government. I will now co-clude my speech with a prayer for the happiness and long life of His Majesty the King-Emperor, and beg you all to drink to the health of His Excellency Lord Kitchener."

Lord Kitchener followed by proposing my health, and in the course of his speech, paid a tribute to the high efficiency of my troops, and to the excellent leadership of General Obaidulla Khan. He referred to my offer to send Bhopal Imperial Service Troops to the front at the time of Zakka Khel expedition, and said that the Government had been unable to accept the offer owing to the expedition having been brought to a successful conclusion in a short space of time. He added, however, that should a suitable opportunity occur, arrangement will, so far as possible, be made for my troops to see active service. He had no doubt that my troops will give a good account of themselves, and bring glory to the State.

My guests dispersed after witnessing a display of fireworks, and honoured me by raising a cheer as I entered my car after saying good bye to them.

The next morning His Excellency visited the Buddhist Topes at Sanchi, and, on his return, paid a farewell visit to me at Ahmedabad Palace. He had tea with me, and was greatly interested in a silver palanquin which he had expressed a desire to see. This was a sample of old Indian art, and had been designed for the use of *parda* ladies on elephant back. Lord Kitchener left for Lucknow by special train in the evening.

Perseverance never fails of its purpose, and the arduous toil of seven years had commenced to bear fruit. The difficulties which beset my path when I assumed the reins of administration, were

AHMEDABAD PALACE.

gradually being overcome by consistent endeavour, and signs of improvement were visible almost everywhere. In the field of administration stagnation means deterioration, and however gratifying the results, and however rapid the progress, there never can be any justification for the policy of resting on one's oars. The programme I had sketched for my guidance in the first two years of my rule, had not yet been completed, and the various reforms initiated had not yet matured. It was vitally important that I should visit the districts again, if the seeds sown in the previous years were to bring forth a good harvest. Therefore, in the seventh year of my administration, I toured the Southern and Eastern districts, and to assist me in inspecting the work of settlement on the spot, I took with me Munshi Ehsan Ilahi, a retired Deputy Collector of the United Provinces, and a man of vast experience of settlement operations, and Munshi Syed Qudrat Ali, an old and experienced official of the State. My tour convinced me that the work had been done expeditiously and well, and that great credit was due to the remarkable energy and ability with which Moulvi Syed Nasiruddin, the Revenue Minister, had brought the operations to a successful conclusion. The work of the collection of old arrears also proceeded apace, greatly facilitated by the rules newly promulgated, which had been framed with due regard for the difficulties of defaulters. The question in regard to which I invited the co-operation of my officials for the first time in the course of this tour, was that of agricultural banks. The efforts of Munshi Maqbul Husain, the Nazim of the

Eastern district, soon produced excellent results, and an agricultural bank commenced operations in that district.

The rights of inheritance, transfer and occupancy conceded to the agriculturists under the new revenue code, have had a wholesome effect upon the state of agriculture generally. The alteration in the dates on which the revenue instalments are paid to the State, has also had excellent results, for the new dates take into consideration the desirability of the cultivators selling their produce in the best market long before the instalment is due. They are thus saved the necessity of meeting their liability to the State at an inconvenient time. The arrangement previously in force operated greatly to their disadvantage by frequently forcing their hands, and enabling the *sowcars* and money-lenders to dictate terms to their debtors.

The income tax was abolished this year. Certain exemptions from the payment of house tax were also made.

The Imperial Service Troops continued to make excellent progress under the command of General Obaidulla Khan, and I was officially informed both by the Assistant Adjutant General in India, and the Inspector General of Imperial Service Troops, that the Victoria Lancers had attained a very high standard of efficiency in musketry and signalling.

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HER HIGHNESS THE BEGAM, 1921.